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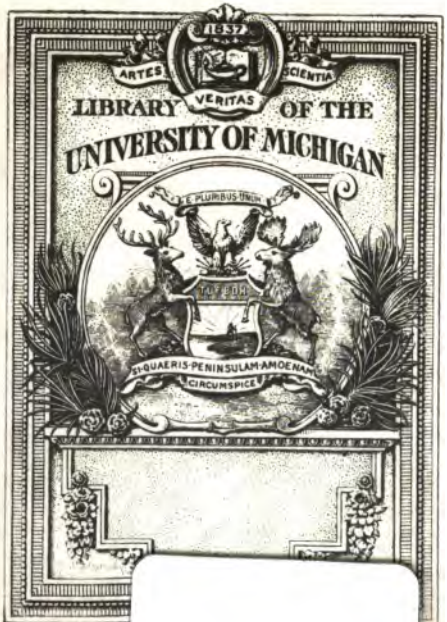

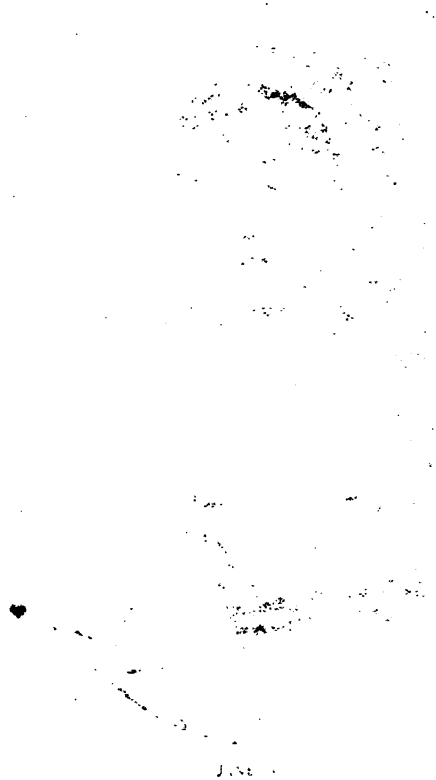

Cambridge Series of English Classics

CHAPTERS

FROM

JANE AUSTEN

EDITED BY

OSCAR FAY ADAMS

EDITOR OF MORRIS'S "ATALANTA'S RACE," "THROUGH THE YEAR WITH THE POETS," AND AUTHOR OF HAND-BOOKS OF ENGLISH AND AMERICAN AUTHORS AND POST-LAUREATE IDYLS

BOSTON 1889

LEE AND SHEPARD PUBLISHERS

10 MILK ST. NEXT "THE OLD SOUTH MEETING HOUSE"

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To my Father,

WILLIAM FULLER ADAMS,

THIS BOOK IS

AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED.

1 Apr. '11 - R.B.R.

PREFACE.

THE student of literature needs no introduction to Jane Austen; he has long since learned to know and to admire her. But to the general reader hers is not the familiar name one could wish it to be; or, if familiar, it is *only* as a name, it is to be feared. The purpose of the present volume is to supply such information concerning Miss Austen and her works as shall enable the ordinary reader to feel that he knows at least more of her than her name, and is in a position to form for himself an intelligent appreciation of her genius. The chapters selected from her six novels are fairly representative ones, and from these, with the aid of the connecting links of explanation, an outline of the main features of each plot can readily be traced. Readers who do not care to pursue the subject further than this, will have the satisfaction of knowing who Jane Austen was, and what she accomplished; but these, it is to be hoped, will be outnumbered by readers who, from what is gained in these pages, may be led to examine the novels in their entirety. For the convenience of such as may

care for them, a few foot-notes have been added by the editor here and there.

The introductory matter has been selected from the mass of material relating to Jane Austen, mainly with a view to present what was freshest and unhackneyed; and, in the cases of Mrs. Thackeray-Ritchie and Miss Keddie, with the purpose also of showing the estimate placed upon Miss Austen by novelists of her own sex. A partial bibliography of Jane Austen will be found at the end of this book. The standard edition of Miss Austen's works is the Steventon, published in six volumes by Messrs. Bentley and Son, of London, in 1883; and with this the chapters selected have been carefully compared. An edition published by another London house is marred by many typographical errors, and the American edition is also faulty in this respect. An error of some moment in this latter edition occurs in the closing chapter of *Northanger Abbey*, where a quarter of a page is, for some reason not easy to see, compressed into a single short sentence, the style of which is quite different from Miss Austen's. As the plates of this edition are by no means new, the error is one of long standing.

FELTON HALL, CAMBRIDGE, MASS.,
August 24, 1888.

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CHAPTERS FROM JANE AUSTEN.

INTRODUCTION.

JANE AUSTEN.

[THE EDITOR.]

DURING the first decade of the nineteenth century five Englishwomen held the highest rank as novelists among writers of their sex. Eighty years have passed. In what estimation are these five women held now? Mrs. Inchbald survives as a dramatist, but who reads her *Simple Story?* Miss Jane Porter's *Thaddeus of Warsaw* and *Scottish Chiefs* still form a small part of the literary pabulum of youth, but have long since ceased to afford delight to readers who have passed their teens. Mrs. Ann Radcliffe, over whose grim romances our great-grandmothers shivered in delightful terror, frightens no one at this end of the century; and so completely have her productions sunk from sight that even the library of the oldest American college does not have *The Mysteries of Udolpho* upon its shelves. Miss Edgeworth's *Castle Rackrent* and *Belinda* have gone down the dusty ways of death along with her *Moral Tales*, for all that this generation may know of their pages. And as for Madame

D'Arblay, who, as Fanny Burney, saw half the readers in the United Kingdom perusing her *Evelina*, *Cecilia*, and *Camilla*, she is a familiar *name* only in our day. The two latter books are forgotten, and *Evelina* is read, if read at all, from curiosity and not for pleasure. Yet these were once great names to conjure with, and the holders of them could not have foreseen that a woman younger than all but one of them — a woman whom they were all destined to outlive, and whose name they did not even know till two or three years before her death — would win a fame to which their own would one day be as the brightness of five farthing rushlights before the noonday sun. Three of them, Miss Porter, Miss Edgeworth, and Madame D'Arblay, outlived her by more than thirty years, — the life-time of a generation, — and must have seen in those thirty years, with a little natural sadness no doubt, the decline of their own popularity contrasting sharply with the growing fame of Jane Austen.

If we ask why these should be neglected and Miss Austen remembered with delight, we shall have answers varying as the tempers of the critics vary, each holding that the particular excelling merit he perceives in Jane Austen is the salt which has kept her stories fresh through nearly a century of time. In one thing, however, the critics are all agreed, and that is in ascribing to Jane Austen an absolute fidelity to the truth of things as she saw them. In this, it seems to me, lies her superiority to all the novelists of her time. Her exquisite sense of proportion would not allow her ever to exaggerate or overstate one detail of her work at the expense of another. She recognized the limitations of her art, and was careful not to overstep them. She did not, like Miss Edgeworth, overweight her stories with a

moral. The moral is there and easily to be seen, but it is part of the construction, not an adjunct. Unlike Miss Porter, she never trenched on the borders of the melodramatic, or, with Mrs. Inchbald, suffered simplicity to become sentimentality. The machinery set in motion by Mrs. Radcliffe to produce her succession of romantic horrors Miss Austen could never have brought herself to employ, and she never went beyond the range of her experience for her material, in this respect differing widely from Madame D'Arblay. She knew, as hardly any novelist has known before or since, just where to draw the line between enough and too much. When Mr. Tony Weller ventures to remark to his son that the valentine the latter is writing to Mary is rather abruptly brought to a close, Sam replies confidently: 'Not a bit on it. She'll vish there wos more, and that's the great art o' letter-writin'.'

As with letter-writing so with novel-writing, the great art is to make the reader wish for more; and of that art Miss Austen was perfect mistress. We feel, as we read her books, that we could bear to hear Mr. Collins, Miss Bates, Lady Catherine, Mrs. Bennet, or Mrs. Norris discourse at far greater length than we are allowed to listen to them; but Miss Austen knew that beyond a certain point these delightful bores would become tiresome, and she stops short of that point. It is this same keen sense of proportion which enables her to keep her subject well under control. She never forgets when she has her pen in hand that she is writing a novel, and accordingly we never find her straying from the subject. We never find her, like Mrs. Whitney, dropping the thread of the narrative to introduce long pages of moralizing; or like Miss Murfree, leaving her charac-

ters to look after themselves while she describes a landscape; or like George Meredith, swelling a narrative out of all reasonable proportions in order to air as many theories of life and action as there are characters in her books. That she *could* moralize, if occasion demanded, we know from passing glimpses we get of her capacity in that direction; that she could describe landscape carefully, pages of *Persuasion* and *Northanger Abbey* conclusively show; and that she had her theories of human action we are equally sure. But her matchless artistic sense forbade in all her books the introduction in the foreground of objects that belonged in the middle distance or in the background, and in this particular she stands almost if not entirely alone among English-writing novelists.

Jane Austen was born December 16, 1775, at Steventon, a small village among the chalk hills of North Hants. Her father, Rev. George Austen, held the adjoining livings of Deane and Steventon, and in the Steventon parsonage the first twenty-five years of her life were spent. The account of Catherine Morland's home, in *Northanger Abbey*, is to some extent a description of the novelist's early home. Her father was a man of fine scholarship, and her mother a woman of education and ability, and both were superior in education and refinement to the occupants of many country parsonages at that period. She was one of a family of seven children, all of whom outlived their gifted sister; Cassandra, her only sister, dying in 1843, and her two younger brothers, Charles and Francis, both of whom became admirals, in 1852 and 1865. The tie of affection between the members of the Austen family seems to have been peculiarly strong, and to Jane Austen especially the world out-

side her immediate family was very little in comparison. Dearest of all was her sister Cassandra, three years her senior. As the families of her brothers increased, the circle of her affections widened; but at no time did she go much into society, although from her letters and from what we know of her in other ways there can be no question of her ability to shine in any society which she might choose to enter. It was during her life at Steventon that *Pride and Prejudice*, *Sense and Sensibility*, and *Northanger Abbey* were written,—all before she had reached the age of twenty-three. Up to that time her knowledge of the world had been gained from the life immediately about her at Steventon, with such variations as a trip to London and occasional visits to friends and relatives in southern England could furnish. But to an acute, observing mind like hers these materials were ample for her purpose. Certainly whoever reads *Pride and Prejudice* is conscious of no lack in this respect.

In the spring of 1801 Miss Austen's father resigned his Steventon parish, and the family removed to Bath, residing first at 4 Sidney Terrace, and afterward in Green Park Buildings. Her nephew and biographer, Mr. Austen-Leigh, conjectures that her unfinished story *The Watsons* was written at Bath, and adduces in support of this theory the fact that the water-marks of the manuscript bear the dates 1803 and 1804. In the autumn of 1804 Miss Austen spent some weeks at Lyme Regis, and to this visit we owe the chapters of *Persuasion* relating to the famous Cobb where Louisa Musgrove fell. In February, 1805, Rev. Mr. Austen died at Bath, and was buried in Wolcot Church. For several months after this Mrs. Austen and her family lived in lodg-

ings on Gay Street, — a street to which reference is made in *Persuasion;* but toward the end of 1805 they removed to Southampton, and for four years resided in Castle Square. The garden of this house was bounded by the city walls, the top of which afforded an extensive view. A flight of steps led up to the top, which was wide enough for a pleasant walk, and here on summer evenings we may fancy Miss Austen often to have walked. In 1809 her brother Edward, who for property reasons had taken the name of Knight, offered his mother and sisters a home near Chawton House, in Hampshire, where he occasionally lived; and accordingly they removed to Chawton Cottage in that year. The house is about a mile from the village of Chawton, and after the death of Cassandra Austen, in 1845, it was made into dwellings for laborers. Of its present condition, Lord Brabourne, her grand-nephew, writing in 1884, says: 'There are three dwellings in the building beside the laborers' club; a low range of outbuildings, probably little touched since Jane's days, flanks the cottage on the Alton side, and behind it is a large garden, now divided among the cottagers, extending beyond the building, also on the farther side, and altogether of sufficient size to have afforded plenty of space for the former occupants to indulge their taste for flowers and shrubs, and to have quiet walks therein.'

Her nephew, Mr. Austen-Leigh, observes that Chawton is really the place most closely connected with her literary career, for there her earlier books were revised and prepared for the press, and there her later books, *Mansfield Park*, *Emma*, and *Persuasion*, were written. Her posthumous story, *Lady Susan*, has always been supposed by her family

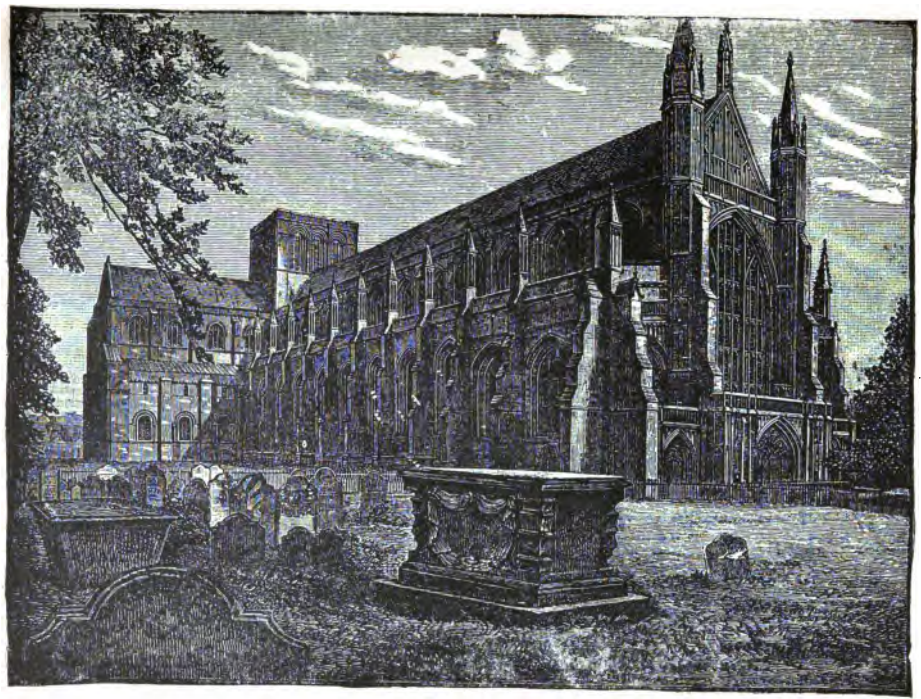
to be an early production, and was probably written at Steventon. Here, surrounded by those for whom she most cared, and in the full maturity of her powers as a writer, — powers which the world was slowly beginning to recognize, — she might not unnaturally have looked forward to a long and happy life of love and tenderness at home and appreciation abroad. But it was not to be. Near the close of 1816 her health began to fail, yet she did not at once lay down her pen. From January 27, 1817, to March 17 she was at work upon another novel, of which twelve chapters were finished before she became too weak to write longer. The last pages, indeed, were written in pencil, when sitting long at her desk became wearisome, and seem to have been afterward traced over in ink. Even in its unfinished, unrevised state this work, judging from the extracts printed in her nephew's memoir, shows as firm a touch as any other portion of her writing. In May of that year she was persuaded to go to Winchester, to consult a famous physician there. She and her sister Cassandra took lodgings in the corner house of College Street; and there, on the morning of July 18, 1817, the end came. In one of these last days at Winchester she wrote thus of the tender sister who watched over her: 'As to what I owe her, and the anxious affection of all my beloved family on this occasion, I can only cry over it, and pray God to bless them more and more.'

Says Mrs. Thackeray-Ritchie: 'One can hardly read this last sentence with dry eyes. It is her parting blessing and farewell to those she had blessed all her life by her presence and her love. Thank God that love is beyond death; and its benediction still with us, not only spoken in words, but by the

signs and the love of a lifetime, that does not end for us as long as we ourselves exist.'

On the 24th of July she was buried in the north aisle of Winchester Cathedral, where a large slab of black marble in the pavement marks the spot. On the north wall near by, Mr. Austen-Leigh erected a memorial brass, inscribed to 'Jane Austen, known to many by her writings, endeared to her family by the varied charms of her character, and ennobled by Christian faith and piety. "She openeth her mouth with wisdom, and in her tongue is the law of kindness."'

All the accounts we have of Jane Austen agree in ascribing to her a sunny, cheerful temperament and sprightly, agreeable manners and conversation. My own opinion, drawn from a careful reading of her letters edited by Lord Brabourne, is that in Elizabeth Bennet, in *Pride and Prejudice*, she unconsciously drew her own portrait. There is to my thinking the same quality of wit, united to good sense, in these familiar letters to her sister, which is so marked a feature of Elizabeth Bennet's character. In the heroine of *Pride and Prejudice* she gave the same full play to her powers in this particular direction that her letters evince; and I like to think that in this delightful heroine we have in some sense the mental portrait, none the less faithful because unconsciously drawn, of one of the sweetest of women as well as of one of the greatest writers of fiction in our English-speaking world.



WINCHESTER CATHEDRAL. Page 8.

MISS AUSTEN'S GENIUS.

[George William Curtis, in *Harper's Magazine*, January, 1881.]

THE busy man who would gladly read if he had only the necessary time, and who knows what store of good books await that happy hour, cannot help looking ruefully upon the readers who have all the time they desire, and who employ it in emptying literary slops into their so-called minds. 'If you must read novels all the time,' said Ernestus to Fragilla, 'why don't you take a turn at Miss Austen? There is a noble library of great and charming works of fiction; and story-telling, from Homer down, is one of the delights of the world. But since, dear madame, Homer is at your service, why should you put up with Tupper and Haynes Bayley? So, when there are such scores of good novels, why should you waste time over Laura Matilda, when you can have Miss Austen, for instance, to tell you stories?'

It was an amusingly fruitless question. Dr. Holmes used to say, when any auditor slipped away from a lecture, 'Well, some people can hold only a gill; others can take a pint, or quart, or even gallon; but when the gill measure is full, you can't pour in any more.' So it is with novel-readers. You can't pour a gallon into a gill measure. The mind which is satisfied with the Dime novel will not care for George Eliot or for Miss Austen or for Walter Scott, still less for Balzac or Thackeray. It is hard to see why Fragilla, who reads a novel for the sake of reading a novel, should not like Miss Austen's stories; the only thing perfectly clear is, that she does not. No writer of novels, however, has been more highly praised by those whose praise is fame. Macaulay delighted in

her novels; and just now a critic says of them, 'As long as novels are read at all, Miss Austen's stories will be resorted to for amusement by the more intelligent, and probably they were never at any time to the taste of the unintelligent.'

Yet, again, why not? They are perfectly simple and intelligible. The course of the tale is not clogged with description or moralizing. They deal with the great theme of the novelist, match-making, and no writer ever attended more strictly than Miss Austen to the business in hand. Her novels are marvels of clearness, and they have a delightfully shrewd humor. The Austen stories have all the misunderstandings and embarrassments and doubts and delays which become the course of true love. There are no extravagancies in them, no sublimated raptures and dark despairs. It is good, honest, every-day match-making among every-day people, and the unintelligent reader does not find himself in the least degree bewildered by the style or the characters. The very finish, the cabinet and microscopic completeness, facilitate the comprehension and the enjoyment of them by unintelligence; while the shrewd humor, and the neat touches of characterization, and the portraiture of certain aspects of English country life and society, commend them to the most intelligent. A distinguished English scholar said to a lecturer who had extolled the tales of Charlotte Brontë, 'I am afraid you do not know that Miss Austen is the better novelist.'

If the scholar had explained, doubtless he would have said, in comparing Miss Brontë or George Eliot with Miss Austen, — and the three are the chief of their sex in this form of English literature, — that her distinction and superiority lie in her more abso-

lute artistic instinct. She writes wholly as an artist, while George Eliot advocates views, and Miss Brontë's fiery page is often a personal protest. In Miss Austen, on the other hand, there is in kind, but infinitely less in degree, the same clear atmosphere of pure art which we perceive in Shakespeare and Goethe. It is a thread of exceeding fineness with which she draws us, but it is spun of pure gold. There are no great characters, no sweep of passion, no quickening of soul and exaltation of purpose and sympathy, upon her page, but there is the pure pleasure of a Watteau.

When Ernestus asked Fragilla if she could explain her indifference to Miss Austen's novels, the novel-reading damsel answered that there was no excitement in them; that they were humdrum, old-fashioned stories of a stupid society,—in a word, that they were not sensational. It is true, and it is true of Scott; but that very fact is the secret of their tenacious hold upon admiration. It is the singular beauty of form which preserves them; and the essential value of literary art can be studied nowhere better than in Miss Austen's works. We do not mean that the whole charm lies in treatment. This was the Wordsworthian error which gave us *Goody Blake* and the *Idiot Boy*, and Coleridge's sonnet upon the *Foal of an Ass: its Mother being tethered near it.* A loud and natural outcry greeted such works, that however artificial the old school of poetry may have been, and however desirable a return to nature might be, yet that it was as absurd to insist that everything was equally poetic, as to assert that everything was equally beautiful and fragrant. It is not the treatment only, it is the discriminating perception, that makes the poet. The anti-Wordsworthians held that it might be foolish to suppose that romance belongs

only to pirates and ruffians, but that it was no less foolish to suppose that therefore idiots were poetic....

Miss Austen's art is not less in the choice than in the treatment. She does not indeed carve the 'Moses' with Michael Angelo, but she moulds the delicate cup, she cuts the gem. When Ernestus parted with Fragilla, he took down *Pride and Prejudice*, and verified all that he had said and thought of Miss Austen.

THE UNIFORM QUALITY OF MISS AUSTEN'S STYLE.

[W. F. P., in *Fraser's Magazine* for January, 1860.]

Miss Austen never attempts to describe a scene or a class of society with which she was not herself thoroughly acquainted. The conversations of ladies with ladies, or of ladies and gentlemen together, are given, but no instance occurs of a scene in which men only are present. The uniform quality of her work is one most remarkable point to be observed in it. Let a volume be opened at any place: there is the same good English, the same refined style, the same simplicity and truth. There is never any deviation into the unnatural or exaggerated; and how worthy of all love and respect is the finely-disciplined genius which rejects the forcible but transient modes of stimulating interest which can so be employed when desired, and which knows how to trust to the never-failing principles of human nature! This very trust has sometimes been made an objection to Miss Austen, and she has been accused of writing dull stories about ordinary people. But her supposed ordinary people are really not such very ordinary people. Let any

one who is inclined to criticise on this score endeavor to construct from among the ordinary people of his own acquaintance one character that shall be capable of interesting any reader for ten minutes. It will then be found how great has been the discrimination of Miss Austen in the selection of her characters, and how skilful is her treatment in the management of them. It is true that the events are for the most part those of daily life, and the feelings are those connected with the usual joys and griefs of familiar existence; but these are the very events and feelings upon which the happiness or misery of most of us depends; and the field which embraces them, to the exclusion of the wonderful, the sentimental, and the historical, is surely large enough, as it certainly admits of the most profitable cultivation. In the end, too, the novel of daily real life is that of which we are least apt to weary: a round of fancy balls would tire the most vigorous admirers of variety in costume, and the return to plain clothes would be hailed with greater delight than their occasional relinquishment ever gives. Miss Austen's personages are always in plain clothes, but no two suits are alike: all are worn with their appropriate differences, and under all human thoughts and feelings are at work.

JANE AUSTEN THE FOUNDER OF REALISM IN FICTION.

[Col. Thomas Wentworth Higginson, in *Women and Men.*]

IT is a curious fact that Paris, to which the works of Jane Austen were lately as unknown as if she were an English painter, has just discovered her ex-

istence. Moreover, it has announced that she, and she only, is the founder of that realistic school which is construed to include authors so remote from each other as the French Zola and the American Howells. The most decorous of maiden ladies is thus made to originate the extreme of indecorum; and the good loyal Englishwoman, devoted to Church and King, is thus made sponsor for the most democratic recognition of persons whom she would have loathed as vulgar. There is something extremely grotesque in the situation; and yet there is much truth in the theory. It certainly looked at one time as if Miss Austen had thoroughly established the claim of her sex to the minute delineation of character and manners, leaving to men the bolder school of narrative romance. She herself spoke of her exquisitely wrought novels as her 'little bit of ivory, two inches wide, on which,' she said, 'I work with a brush so fine as to produce little effect after much labor.' Yet in the opinion of Sir Walter Scott, and all succeeding critics, the result was quite worth the effort, Scott saying that he himself did the 'big bow-wow style as well as anybody,' but that all the minuter excellencies were peculiarly her province. As a result, she has far surpassed in fame her immediate contemporaries of her own sex. Madame D'Arblay (Fanny Burney), Miss Porter, Mrs. Opie, and even Miss Edgeworth are now little read, while Miss Austen's novels seem as if they were written yesterday.

But the curious thing is, that of the leading novelists in the English tongue to-day it is the men, not the women, who have taken up Miss Austen's work, while the women show more inclination, if not to the 'big bow-wow style' of Scott, at least to the novel of plot and narrative. Anthony Trollope

among the lately dead, James and Howells among the living, are the lineal successors of Miss Austen. Perhaps it is an old-fashioned taste which leads me to think that neither of these does his work quite so well as she; but they all belong to the same photographic school.

JANE AUSTEN'S NOVELS.

[From *Jane Austen and her Works*, by Henrietta Keddie, 'Sarah Tytler.']

THE study of Jane Austen's novels is in some respects a liberal education. The proper appreciation of these stories has been suggested as a gauge of intellect. But though the verdict of the best judges, including the earnest, well-nigh reverential approbation of Sir Walter Scott, and the boundless enthusiasm of Lord Macaulay, who has pronounced Jane Austen, in her more limited walk, next to Shakespeare, the test is unfair, so long as men's and women's minds, no less than the schools of fiction, are in two major, in addition to many minor divisions. Of course, where authors are concerned, in rare and great instances, as in that of Shakespeare, the divisions are united, and we have a comprehensive, many-sided genius. But these exceptions are few and far between, like stars of the first magnitude. There is a cast of inventive intellect and a school of writing which deal exclusively with human nature in the mass, choosing to work with common materials, and to make them valuable by the penetrating fidelity and nice perception and adaptation of the workmanship. There is another order of genius and of wit, which selects an extraordinary, sometimes an abnormal subject, whether man or

woman, story or surroundings, and by the sheer power and the passionate insight which are shown in the treatment compels our comprehension and sympathy for what would otherwise be strange, perhaps repugnant to us.

These minds and these schools are, and always must be, in natural antagonism to each other. Among women, Jane Austen may be taken as the representative of the first class, Charlotte Brontë of the second. The fervent, faithful followers of the one genius are apt more or less to condemn and slight the other.

It is more than questionable whether the two women, had they been contemporaries, could have sympathized strongly. Of course, the opportunity was not granted to Jane Austen; but in the case of Charlotte Brontë, who stands here for what is, after all, the narrower school, though its inspiration may be deeper, she was perplexed and annoyed by the recommendation of a critic to whom she paid deference, that she should read and re-read Miss Austen. Jane Austen's work was "tame and domestic," if not peddling, to Charlotte Brontë.

After dismissing the unfair insistence on a universal acknowledgment of the surpassing qualities, in her own line, of Jane Austen, it is still true that they are as nearly as possible perfect. Great variety of character, though in one class and amid the same surroundings, — which rendered the achievement of such variety the more remarkable, — lively interest excited by the most legitimate means; the artistic cunning with which every-day events are handled; keen irony; delicate, exquisite humor which never fails; the greatest capacity for selecting and grouping her materials, — where shall we find these attrac-

tions in an equal degree to that in which they are to be met in Jane Austen's novels? Above all, every story is as wholesome and sweet, without cloyness, as English wheatfields repaying the cultivation of generations, and the roses, set in hardy prickles, of English gardens. We hear much, with reason, of the great English humorists. Why has a secondary place among them not been assigned to Jane Austen? Making due allowance for sex and rank, and the double restrictions which they laid upon her, none can read her novels with intelligent appreciation and fail to see that she deserves to stand high in the rank of English humorists, unless, indeed, the root-word 'humor' is understood to mean oddity and eccentricity, and the definition 'humorist' is confined to one who illustrates oddities. For it is one of Miss Austen's crowning distinctions that just as she hardly ever exaggerated or caricatured, so she did not care to have to do with men and women riding their hobbies.

MISS AUSTEN'S CHARACTERS.

[Mrs. Thackeray-Ritchie, in *The Cornhill Magazine*, August, 1871.]

NOTWITHSTANDING a certain reticence and self-control which seems to belong to their age, and with all their quaint dresses, and ceremonies, and manners, the ladies and gentlemen in *Pride and Prejudice* and its companion novels seem like living people out of our own acquaintance transported bodily into a by-gone age, represented in the half-dozen books that contain Jane Austen's works. Dear books! bright, sparkling with wit and animation, in which the homely heroines charm, the dull hours fly, and the very bores are enchanting. . . .

She has a gift of telling a story in a way that has never been surpassed. She rules her places, times, characters, and marshals them with unerring precision. Her machinery is simple but complete; events group themselves so vividly and naturally in her mind that in describing imaginary scenes we seem not only to read them but to live them, to see the people coming and going, — the gentlemen courteous and in top-boots, the ladies demure and piquant; we can almost hear them talking to one another. No retrospects; no abrupt flights, as in real life; days and events follow one another. Last Tuesday does not suddenly start into existence all out of place; nor does 1790 appear upon the scene when we are well on in '21. Countries and continents do not fly from hero to hero, nor do long and divergent adventures happen to unimportant members of the company. With Miss Austen, days, hours, minutes, succeed each other like clock-work; one central figure is always present on the scene; that figure is always prepared for company. . . .

Some books and people are delightful, we can scarce tell why; they are not so clever as others that weary and fatigue us. It is a certain effort to read a story, however touching, that is disconnected and badly related. It is like an ill-drawn picture, of which the coloring is good. Jane Austen possessed both gifts of color and drawing. She could see human nature as it was, — with near-sighted eyes, it is true; but having seen, she could combine her picture by her art, and color it from life. . . .

It is difficult, reading the novels of succeeding generations, to determine how much each book reflects of the time in which it was written; how much of its character depends upon the mind and

mood of the writer. The greatest minds, the most original, have the least stamp of the age, the most of that dominant natural reality which belongs to all great minds. We know how a landscape changes as the day goes on, and how the scene brightens and gains in beauty as the shadows begin to lengthen. The clearest eyes must see by the light of their own hour. Jane Austen's hour must have been a midday hour, — bright, unsuggestive, with objects standing clear without relief or shadow. She did not write of herself, but of the manners of her age. This age is essentially an age of men and women of strained emotion, little remains of starch or powder or courtly reserve. What we have lost in calm, in happiness, in tranquillity, we have gained in intensity. Our danger is now not of expressing and feeling too little, but of expressing more than we feel. . . .

Miss Austen's heroines have a stamp of their own. They have a certain gentle self-respect and humor and hardness of heart in which modern heroines are a little wanting. Whatever happens they can for the most part speak of gayly and without bitterness. Love with them does not mean a passion so much as an interest, — deep, silent, not quite incompatible with a secondary flirtation. Marianne Dashwood's tears are evidently meant to be dried. Jane Bennet smiles, sighs, and makes excuses for Bingley's neglect. Emma passes one disagreeable morning making up her mind to the unnatural alliance between Mr. Knightley and Harriet Smith. It was the spirit of the age, and perhaps one not to be unenvied. It was not that Jane Austen herself was incapable of understanding a deeper feeling. In the last written page of her last written book there is an expression of the deepest and truest experience. Anne Elliot's

talk with Captain Harville is the touching utterance of a good woman's feelings. They are speaking of men and women's affections. 'You are always laboring and toiling,' she says, 'exposed to every risk and hardship. Your home, country, friends, all united; neither time nor life to be called your own. It would be hard indeed (with a faltering voice) if a woman's feelings were to be added to all this.'

Farther on she says eagerly: '"I hope I do justice to all that is felt by you, and by those who resemble you. God forbid that I should undervalue the warm and faithful feelings of any of my fellow-creatures. I should deserve utter contempt if I dared to suppose that true attachment and constancy were known only by woman. No! I believe you capable of everything great and good in your married lives. I believe you equal to every important exertion, and to every domestic forbearance, so long as, — if I may be allowed the expression, — so long as you have an object; I mean while the woman you love lives, and lives for you. *All the privilege I claim for my own (it is not a very enviable one, you need not covet it), is that of loving longest when existence or hope is gone.*"[1] She could not immediately have uttered another sentence.'

Dear Anne Elliot! sweet, impulsive, womanly, tender hearted, — one can almost hear her voice pleading the cause of all true women. In those days, when perhaps people's nerves were stronger than they are now, sentiment may have existed in a less degree, or have been more ruled by judgment; it may have been calmer and more matter-of-fact; and yet Jane Austen, at the very end of her life,

[1] The italics are Mrs. Ritchie's.

wrote thus. Her words seem to ring in our ears after they have been spoken. Anne Elliot must have been Jane Austen herself, speaking for the last time. There is something so true, so womanly about her, that it is impossible not to love her. She is the bright-eyed heroine of the earlier novels matured, chastened, cultivated, to whom fidelity has brought only greater depth and sweetness instead of bitterness and pain.

THE DISCRIMINATIVE SKILL OF JANE AUSTEN.

[Lord Macaulay in article on Madame D'Arblay, *Edinburgh Review*, January, 1843.]

SHAKESPEARE has had neither equal nor second. But among the writers who, in the point which we have noticed, have approached nearest to the manner of the great master, we have no hesitation in placing Jane Austen, a woman of whom England is justly proud. She has given us a multitude of characters, all in a certain sense commonplace, all such as we meet every day. Yet they are all as perfectly discriminated from each other as if they were the most eccentric of human beings. There are, for example, four clergymen, none of whom we should be surprised to find in any parsonage in the kingdom,—Mr. Edward Ferrars, Mr. Henry Tilney, Mr. Edmund Bertram, and Mr. Elton. They are all specimens of the upper part of the middle class. They have all been liberally educated. They all lie under the restraints of the same sacred profession. They are all young. They are all in love. Not one of them has any hobby horse, to use the phrase of Sterne. Not one has a ruling passion, such as we read of in Pope.

Who would not have expected them to be insipid likenesses of each other? No such thing. Harpagon[1] is not more unlike to Jourdain,[2] Joseph Surface is not more unlike to Sir Lucius O'Trigger, than every one of Miss Austen's young divines to all his reverend brethren. And almost all this is done by touches so delicate that they elude analysis, that they defy the powers of description, and that we know them to exist only by the general effect to which they have contributed.

MISS AUSTEN'S HEROES AND HEROINES.

[From critical remarks by Lord Edward Brabourne prefixed to the *Letters of Jane Austen*, 1884.]

In all her books the heroes are decidedly inferior to the heroines, their characters less vigorously drawn, and themselves less interesting to the reader. There they are, because every heroine requires a hero; but in every case it is *she* and not *he* who is the prominent figure in the play.

Let us take the six novels into view. *Pride and Prejudice*. gives us Darcy; *Sense and Sensibility*, Edward Ferrars; *Northanger Abbey*, Henry Tilney; *Mansfield Park*, Edmund Bertram; *Emma*, Mr. Knightley; and *Persuasion*, Captain Wentworth. Then look at the six heroines to match, — Elizabeth Bennet (she is sometimes spoken of in the novel as 'Eliza Bennet,' and it is noticeable in our Letters that Jane constantly calls her Elizabeths 'Eliza'), Elinor Dashwood, Catherine Morland, Fanny Price, Emma Woodhouse, and Anne Elliot. How much more we

[1] A miser in Molière's *L'Avare*.
[2] The hero of Molière's comedy, *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*.

seem to know and to sympathize with the women than with the men throughout!

Darcy is really the only one for whom I feel much regard. He was certainly proud, a fault with which his education and surroundings had much to do; and, after all, it is perhaps not wholly inexcusable pride which causes a man to hesitate before seeking to ally himself to a family of which the mother is insufferably vulgar and silly, several of the daughters objectionable, and the connections of a rank in life inferior to his own. Before his own heart was touched, it was neither wrong nor unnatural that he should strive to deter his friend Bingley from such a connection; and when he found himself vanquished by the charms of Elizabeth, he got rid of his pride with a rapidity as commendable as that with which the lady dismissed her 'prejudice.' I think that we are told more of Darcy than of most of Jane's other heroes; and the gradual alteration of Elizabeth's opinion of him as his character becomes better understood, and consequently better appreciated by her, is told and worked out in the most admirable manner. The gentleman's disposition was not one which made him likely to be the victim of a hasty attachment; and we watch with interest the struggle which goes on in his mind before he allows his growing love for Elizabeth to conquer his objections to her family. When this result has been accomplished, the lady is still perfectly unaware of the conquest which she has achieved; and his declaration to her at the parsonage, where she is on a visit to her friend Charlotte Collins, takes her entirely by surprise. This is a very good scene in itself, and marks an epoch in the hero's life; for her contumelious rejection of his advances has a marvellous

effect upon him, to the very great improvement of his character. He accepts her decision in a manner which would have made it difficult for an ordinary writer to bring the two together again except by some strange and unusual method. Jane, however, manages it all in a most natural manner. Some words of Elizabeth regarding his two greatest offences — the abstracting of her sister's lover and the supposed wrongs of Wickham — induce him to write a long letter of explanation, which commences the change in the lady's heart; and from that moment Darcy only appears during the rest of the story in the most amiable light. I reject altogether the idea that the beauties of Pemberley had any effect in inducing Elizabeth to reconsider her refusal; and the sole doubt which remains in my mind is the extent to which gratitude for his generous behavior to her sister Lydia and her worthless husband really supplied the place of a warmer feeling in Elizabeth's heart. Gratitude, however, is a soil in which love readily grows and thrives; and in this instance the two may very well have existed and flourished side by side.

But after Darcy, what hero have we in whom it is possible to feel any deep interest such as that which attaches us to several of the heroines? Edward Ferrars scarcely inspires much respect. Whatever excuse there may be for his conduct, he certainly behaves in such a manner as to induce Elinor to believe him attached to herself, whilst all the time he was engaged to another woman; for if this had not been the case, the discovery of the engagement would not have filled the sensible heroine with such astonishment and dismay. His engagement was a boyish entanglement from which a man of any

strength of character would have freed himself as soon as he found how much he had mistaken his own feelings, and how unsuited he and the lady were to each other; while there is something ludicrous in the rapidity with which, the very moment that his fool of a brother has conveniently taken her off his hands, he hurries off to Elinor to make her happy by the assurance that he had really been all the while false to the lady whom he had still proposed to marry, and had loved her and her alone, although perfectly prepared to sacrifice her to his absurd 'engagement.' His readiness, moreover, to become a clergyman because clerical preferment was found for him, does not add to the attractiveness of his character; but Jane's picture of a clergyman is generally that of a second son, who enters the profession in order to hold a family living, — an idea not unnatural in the daughter of one who was himself the possessor of one of those benefices.

Our two next heroes, Henry Tilney and Edmund Bertram, are to be classed in this category. Of the former, indeed, we know very little. A ballroom acquaintance at Bath, whose father, being deceived as to Catherine Morland's position and fortune, invites her to Northanger, and courts her on his son's behalf until he finds out the mistake, we really know nothing more of this hero than that he displays a certain amount of amiable good sense in his conversations with Catherine, and a creditable degree of firmness in refusing to give her up at his father's command, or to root out of his heart that love which had been fostered, if not absolutely planted therein by the paternal hand. The best that we can say of this hero is, that if we knew him more we should probably like him better.

Of Edmund Bertram we know a good deal more, and he should perhaps rank next to Darcy in order of merit. His uniform kindness to his little cousin (which won her heart from the first), his superiority to the other members of his family, and general good conduct throughout the story, entitle him to our respect, if not to something more. We cannot help feeling sorry that he did not show a little more firmness in the matter of the theatricals, but are pleased at his readiness to give Fanny Price (at a time when he was not in the least in love with her) the full credit which she deserved for her conduct on that trying occasion. He may be blamed for having been attracted by the fascinations of Miss Crawford, when Fanny was there to be compared with her; but this was one of the most natural things in the world. Miss Crawford undoubtedly *was* fascinating, and moreover had and showed precisely that kind of predilection for Edmund which is so delightful to a young man when evinced by a pretty, clever, and agreeable person of the opposite sex. Besides, Fanny's perfections being before his eyes every day, naturally struck him less than those of her rival; and he went on comfortably considering his affection for his cousin to be of the most quiet and brotherly description, until the exigencies of the story compelled him to find out that it was something of a different nature. Take him all in all, I must own Edmund Bertram to be, after all, a hero above the average of such people, and one less inferior to the heroine than any other of his class in the six novels, excepting always Darcy, to whom I remain faithful; inasmuch as I think there is more power in his character, and more masterly touches in its delineation.

I frankly confess that I never could endure Mr. Knightley. He interfered too much, he judged other people rather too quickly and too harshly, he was too old for Emma, and, being the elder brother of her elder sister's husband, there was something incongruous in the match which I could never bring myself to approve. To tell the truth, I always wanted Emma to marry Frank Churchill, and so did Mr. and Mrs. Weston. Mr. Knightley, however, is an eminently respectable hero, — too respectable, in fact, to be a hero at all; he does not seem to rise above the standard of respectability into that of heroism; and I should have disputed his claim to the position had he not satisfactorily established it beyond all possible doubt by marrying the heroine. But I have never felt satisfied with the marriage, and feel very sure that Emma was not nearly so happy as she pretended. I am certain that he frequently lectured her, was jealous of every agreeable man that ventured to say a civil word to her, and evinced his intellectual superiority by such a plethora of eminently sensible conversations as either speedily hurried her to an untimely grave, or induced her to run away with somebody possessed of an inferior intellect but more endearing qualities.

As to Captain Wentworth we are really told so little that there is nothing to say, except that he was a most faithful lover, but would have been wiser if he had not waited so long before letting the object of his affections know that such was the case. There is something pleasant about all Jane's sailors. Her sailor brothers were good examples of their class, and from them she probably drew her ideas. Not a word can be said against Captain Wentworth, and I sincerely hope that he and his Anne lived very happily all the rest of their lives.

But now let us turn from heroes to heroines, and I shall hardly know how to praise enough. Let Elizabeth Bennet stand forth; she is, to my mind, the most delightful character that ever condescended to display her perfections in a novel. She is not so intensely sweet and amiable as Anne Elliot, so sternly sensible as Elinor Dashwood, so simple and grateful as Fanny Price, so 'superior' as Emma; but not one of them all can equal her as a heroine of romance, and that principally because there is nothing romantic about her. She is drawn with such an exquisite touch, that she is far more like a personal acquaintance than one 'in a book;' one enters into her feelings, understands her thoughts, her hopes, and her fears, and cannot help taking the same sort of interest in her proceedings as if she was one's own relation. How cleverly is the line drawn which separates her and Jane from the rest of the Bennet family, to whom they were as much superior as if they had been the children of other parents! How keenly we share her discomfort at the vulgarity of her mother and the folly of her younger sisters; how warmly we appreciate her solicitude for Jane, and her anger against those who had separated that beloved sister from the man for whom she cared; how well we understand the warmth of honest sympathetic indignation with which she received Wickham's account of his ill-treatment by Mr. Darcy, and the equally honest contrition she experienced when she discovered how much that indignation had been misplaced; with what interest do we watch the gradual change of her opinion of Darcy, as the mists which have enveloped his character are gradually cleared away; and how heartily do we rejoice at her ultimate decision to accept the man who so well deserved her, and at the opportunity, created by the most bitter

opponent of the marriage, which happily brought him a second time to her feet!

I do not know any character in any novel that ever was written, whose career from first to last, throughout the whole book, one follows with such intense and continuous interest as that of this charming Elizabeth. There are several scenes to which I might call special attention as illustrative of her character; but I will be content with one, to my mind the most delicious and inimitable scene in the whole book, — I mean the interview between Elizabeth and Lady Catherine de Bourgh, when the latter, furious at the report that her nephew, Mr. Darcy, is about to marry Elizabeth, drives over, in all the dignity and grandeur which can be imparted by a chaise and four, to insist upon its being immediately contradicted. If it were possible that our admiration of Elizabeth could be increased, her conduct and language during this trying interview would certainly accomplish such a result. The calmness and self-possession with which she encounters the arrogant insolence of her visitor, the courageous and undaunted spirit with which she refuses to be bullied and browbeaten, and the acute but perfectly civil manner in which she holds her own, and puts her adversary entirely in the wrong throughout the whole of the conversation, are described with a rare talent; and the whole scene is one which, both in its conception and execution, is undoubtedly one of the most excellent that ever was written.

I could dwell with delight upon Elizabeth for a much longer time; but in my comparison of heroes and heroines I can only afford a short space to each, and therefore hurry on to *Sense and Sensibility*, where Elinor and Marianne Dashwood are the two

prominent figures, and I suppose that the former, being 'Sense,' has the best claim to the heroine's niche. She is certainly an excellent young woman, though to my mind less interesting than some of her sister heroines. It undoubtedly was a position the reverse of pleasant, to be made the unwilling confidant of a girl so inferior to herself in good-breeding and refinement as Lucy Steele; and to receive as the first great secret the news that her own lover was engaged to this obnoxious young woman. It was disagreeable, too, to have a sister whose 'sensibility' took the form of lovesick extravagances, which must have constantly grated against Elinor's 'sense,' and who, by carrying her hysterical sentimentality so far as nearly to die of it, caused a disagreeable interruption to the tranquillity of their domestic life. But under all these circumstances Elinor evinced a fortitude and self-control which must command our respect if it does not attract our admiration; she takes a common-sense view of everything which occurs, submits with proper resignation to things which appear inevitable, condoles with and comforts her sister in her love disappointment without disclosing her own much greater reason to be heart-broken, and contentedly accepts and settles down with her lover when time and the vagaries of Miss Lucy Steele have enabled him to declare himself in his true colors. Altogether she is an admirably-drawn character, and the contrast between her 'sense' and the 'sensibility' of Marianne, so well depicted and sustained, elevates her, at her sister's expense, to a very creditable place among the list of heroines.

Upon the whole, I think Catherine Morland the least interesting of the aforesaid list; and yet she is

the heroine of such an interesting story, that I feel sorry as soon as I have written the words. I am consoled, however, by the reflection that the authoress begins her book by the remark that in her early youth nobody would ever have supposed Catherine born to be a heroine. She was the daughter of a clergyman, one of a large family, rather uninformed, very romantic, and, for the rest of it, a good-tempered, well-disposed, and good-looking girl, with no very marked characteristic, or striking ability, or anything else to distinguish her from the common herd of girls. She is made interesting by the story; and as she generally takes a right view of things, is grateful for any kindness shown to her, shrinks from vulgarity, takes naturally to good things and people, and behaves with great propriety in the different positions in which she is placed, one can forgive her too great fondness for romances replete with horrors, and the readiness with which she harbors the suspicion that General Tilney had made away with his wife. We are able, upon the whole, to take her to our affections as a commendable specimen of the heroine tribe, though certainly eclipsed by other creations of the same fertile brain.

Fanny Price is altogether of a different calibre, and according to my opinion contests with Emma Woodhouse the second place after Elizabeth Bennet. They are, of course, very different people in many respects, but as a matter of taste I am inclined to give the preference to Fanny. She is so gentle, so grateful, so ready to do a kindness to any and every body, so submissive to Aunt Norris, so thoughtful for Lady Bertram, so good a daughter, so loving a sister, such an affectionate cousin, such a true and faithful friend, that one is inclined to wonder how a character can

have been drawn with so few faults as to be near perfection, and yet so natural that it is impossible not to recognize it as a true picture. From her first entry into Mansfield Park down to the very end of the story, our hearts go out to Fanny Price, and we love her with a steady and unvarying love. She wins our sympathy from the moment we make her acquaintance, and keeps it throughout her whole career. She had something to bear, too, during her sojourn in her uncle's house. There are few things more difficult to endure than injustice, and of this Aunt Norris inflicted a perpetual and unlimited amount upon the devoted head of her long-suffering niece. But there are worse things to endure in life than even the injustice of an ill-conditioned old aunt. It must have been a sore trial to Fanny to see Mary Crawford stealing from her that which she prized beyond everything else, — her cousin Edmund's affection, — and a sorer trial still to see him bestowing that affection upon a woman who did not come up to Fanny's standard, and whom she could not deem worthy of her cousin. Very trying, too, must have been those conversations with Edmund, wherein, doubtful of himself and of Miss Crawford, he spoke of the latter to Fanny, evidently seeking to be strengthened and encouraged by her in his affection for her rival; and trying, too, and in no ordinary degree, must have been the friendship of that rival for herself, especially when it took the form of endeavoring to secure her acceptance of Henry Crawford for her husband. But Fanny came well and nobly out of every ordeal. The same simple, quiet, honest determination to do what her conscience told her to be right, which sustained her in that severe trial in the matter of the theatricals in the absence of Sir Thomas, stood her

equally in good stead throughout all her other troubles and trials. If we admire Elizabeth Bennet most, I really think that upon the whole we love Fanny Price next. It is impossible not to love such a thoroughly unselfish character; and I think she must be admitted to be one of the best of heroines and most charming of people.

The partisans of Emma must forgive me for placing her only third on the list. She is a very charming creature, and all the more so for not having been drawn faultless, but with just enough imperfection to set her off, without taking her out of the category of ordinary mortals, to whom absolute perfection is an impossibility. Her propensity for match-making was decidedly objectionable; but as she failed so signally in this respect, it was probably its own punishment. Left the mistress of her father's house at an early age by the marriage of her sister, Emma ran a good chance of being spoiled; and such would probably have been her fate but for the excellent governess provided for her in the person of Miss Taylor, who became an equally excellent wife for Mr. Weston just before the commencement of the story. Still, Miss Emma seems to have been tolerably self-willed, and to have been possessed of an independent spirit of her own, and a confidence in her own judgment which the adulation of her neighbors must have considerably increased. One does not exactly see *why* Emma Woodhouse should have been regarded as a little goddess in her own neighborhood; but such appears to have been the case, and she is depicted throughout the story as the intellectual superior of everybody else except Mr. Knightley, who treats her more like an elder brother than a lover, administers to her a well-deserved rebuke upon the

occasion of her making an unkindly, satirical remark to poor Miss Bates, and graciously marries her when he finds that he has been mistaken in supposing her attached to Frank Churchill. Emma is undoubtedly a well-drawn character, and one that enjoys a deserved popularity; but I confess she is not my favorite heroine, as she is the favorite of many admirers of Jane Austen's novels, and had I been the hero of the piece, I am by no means sure that I should not have preferred to marry Jane Fairfax, who, despite her mistake in entering into a secret engagement with Frank Churchill, is a sweet and womanly character, and would have required less looking after and management than the 'superior' Emma.

I have but little to say of Anne Elliot, the heroine of *Persuasion*, but that little is good. With a worldly father and unsympathetic elder sister, her early life, after the loss of her mother, was not of the happiest description; nor had its happiness been increased by the breaking off of her engagement with Lieutenant Wentworth, their mutual attachment having been thwarted by that want of pecuniary resources which so often operates as a barrier in similar cases. Anne Elliot, taking after her mother rather than her father, was of a sweet disposition, amiable in every relation of life, and so faithful to her first love as to have been quite ready to 'take up' with him again when he came home eight years later with the rank of Captain; and his sister's husband, Admiral Crofts, had taken Kellynch, Sir Walter Elliot's family place. The gentleman, however, from timidity, doubt of her affection, and afterward from the report that she was to marry her rich but profligate cousin, Mr Elliot, held aloof, and did not renew his former suit. Sweet, modest, tender-hearted,

womanly Anne Elliot behaved just as she should have done under such a condition of affairs. Of course she never obtruded herself upon her lover in the slightest degree, or took any steps to let him know the unchanged state of her affections. She remained true to him throughout all temptations to the contrary, refused her cousin, kept her secret with proper reserve until the right moment and opportunity arrived, and then without hesitation forgave Captain Wentworth his doubts and delay, owned her continued affection without any pretence of concealment, and obtained the husband for whom she had so long waited, and whom she so well deserved. We do not hear so much of Anne Elliot as of some of Jane's other heroines; but we hear enough to sympathize with her from first to last, to appreciate the sweetness of her character, and to wish her every possible happiness in her married life. . . .

I have spoken elsewhere of a certain want of plot and incident; but this I say in praise rather than blame, the wonder being at the manner in which the books are made so intensely interesting. Jane's characters are so well drawn as to be interesting under the most trivial and ordinary circumstances.

Take one instance from *Pride and Prejudice.* There is nothing very remarkable in a man having married a silly wife, although one is inclined to wonder that a person with such a keen sense of humor and lively appreciation of the folly of other people as Mr. Bennet should have been caught by a pretty face, when handicapped by such intense and silly vulgarity as that which his wife displayed. Such things *did* happen in Jane Austen's days, and probably happen still; but for all that one may

wonder on, consoling oneself with the reflection that the man must always be punished for the rest of his life. But the remarkable thing is, that out of this somewhat ordinary couple Jane manages to create two very amusing characters, whose daily conversations required no stirring events of any kind to make them so interesting as to cause the reader always to wish they were longer. Mr. Bennet bore his fate with more equanimity than many men would have done; and his quaint, dry remarks are irresistibly comic, and almost as amusing as the absurdities of his better half.

Mr. Collins, again, is really only a not uncommon character slightly exaggerated. But the exaggeration is carried out after a fashion so delightfully clever that Mr. Collins becomes one of the very best characters in the book, and his letters are not to be equalled. The announcement of his intention to visit Longbourn House, with the scarcely-concealed view of marrying one of his cousins by way of atonement for being next in the entail, and therefore the future possessor of their home upon their father's death, is our first introduction to this worthy individual, and we are at once led to expect amusement from such a character. The reality, however, even surpasses our anticipations. His conversations are charming. The self-assurance with which he proposes to Elizabeth; the readiness with which he consoles himself with her friend, Charlotte Lucas; above all, the grateful servility with which he accepts the crumbs which fall from Lady Catherine de Bourgh's table, and magnifies her with continuous adoration, — all combine to enhance our admiration of the skill which could draw such a character with a touch which makes it amusingly ridiculous without

being unnaturally absurd. But perhaps the letter in which he condoles with Mr. Bennet on the occasion of Lydia's elopement, and that in which he warns Elizabeth against marrying Lady Catherine's nephew without the consent of that august potentate, are two of the finest pieces of composition in the book. The first is simply inimitable, and the second falls little short of it.[1]

[1] While many readers, perhaps, will find it difficult to agree with Lord Brabourne in *all* his conclusions regarding the creations of his great-aunt, yet the justice of many of his remarks will, I think, be generally recognized by those familiar with Miss Austen's novels. His manner of treatment betrays something of flippancy, but this can be excused; and still more readily can we pardon his occasional over-enthusiasm, since it is evidently most sincere, and, moreover, he is speaking of the works of a much reverenced relative.

PRIDE AND PREJUDICE.

BEGUN AT STEVENTON, OCTOBER, 1796; COMPLETED, AUGUST, 1797; PUBLISHED, 1813.

PRIDE AND PREJUDICE.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

(The principal characters in the Novel are indicated by the heavier type.)

Mr. Bennet: A gentleman of small but comfortable fortune, living at Longbourn, a village in Hertfordshire, about a mile from the larger town of Meryton. He 'was so odd a mixture of quick parts, sarcastic humor, reserve and caprice, that the experience of twenty-three years had not been sufficient to make his wife understand his character.'

Mr. Bingley: A young man of fortune living at Netherfield, a few miles from Mr. Bennet's. He is good-tempered and easy-mannered, and soon after coming to Netherfield falls in love with Jane Bennet, a proceeding much to the distaste of his sisters, Miss Bingley and Mrs. Hurst, and at first, also, opposed by his friend Darcy.

Rev. Mr. Collins: A young clergyman with very slender mental capacities, but of absurdly pompous and solemn manners, who spends his time mainly in magnifying the virtues of his patron Lady Catherine de Bourgh. He proposes to Elizabeth Bennet, but on being refused consoles himself a couple of days later with the hand of Charlotte Lucas, a friend of Elizabeth.

Mr. Darcy: The hero of the story. A young man of twenty-eight, stiff and reserved in manner, and with an exalted idea of his own importance as a gentleman of good family. He is nephew to Lady Catherine, and his family estate is situated at Pemberley, in Derbyshire.

Colonel Fitzwilliam: A nephew of Lady Catherine, and cousin to Mr. Darcy. A pleasant, well-bred gentleman, who admires Elizabeth Bennet.

Colonel Forster: The colonel of the regiment to which Wickham belongs, and at whose house Lydia Bennet is visiting when persuaded by Wickham to elope with him. Though frequently referred to he does not appear as one of the speakers.

Mr. Gardiner: A London man of business, brother to Mrs. Bennet, but greatly superior to her in manners and education.

Mr. Hurst: Brother-in-law to Bingley. A minor character, who appears but once or twice in the tale. 'An indolent man who lived only to eat, drink, and play at cards.'

Sir William Lucas: A retired tradesman of Meryton, who having received the dignity of knighthood while Mayor of Meryton, has since retired from business to Lucas Lodge, not far from the Bennets'. He is much elated by his rank, but is always friendly and obliging.

Mr. Wickham: The son of the steward at Pemberley. A worthless young man, who after an attempted elopement with Miss Darcy comes to Meryton with the regiment to which he belongs, and possessing agreeable manners, he becomes a general favorite. He is attentive to one and another of the young ladies of the neighborhood, and after some time elopes with Lydia Bennet, who is visiting her friend Mrs. Forster, at Brighton.

Mrs. Bennet: The silly wife of Mr. Bennet. 'A woman of mean understanding, little information, and uncertain temper. When she was discontented she fancied herself nervous. The business of her life was to get her daughters married; its solace was visiting and news.'

Jane Bennet: Oldest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Bennet. A gentle, amiable girl, who can never think ill of any one. Beloved by Bingley, whom she finally marries.

Elizabeth Bennet: Second daughter of the Bennets and the heroine of the tale. A girl of much natural intelligence, quick wit, and beauty. She becomes prejudiced against Darcy on her first meeting with him, and will not see anything in him to admire. On his conquering his pride so far as to ask her to marry him, she declines his offer. Becoming convinced that her prejudices against him are baseless, she learns to admire and finally to love him, and on his second proposal she accepts him.

Mary Bennet: The third daughter of the Bennets. A plain-featured girl given to moralizing and to making sententious remarks.

Kitty Bennet: Fourth daughter of the Bennets. A rather silly young woman, who is much under the influence of her younger sister.

Lydia Bennet: Youngest daughter of the Bennets. A supremely silly, headstrong girl, who cares for nothing but flirting with the officers of the regiment quartered at Meryton, and who elopes with Wickham.

Miss Bingley: Sister to Bingley. The pretended friend of Jane Bennet, but who endeavors to detach her brother from the latter's influence. She is in love with Darcy, and very jealous of his attentions to Elizabeth.

Miss Darcy: The young sister of Darcy. A diffident girl of sixteen, who is much in awe of her brother.

Lady Catherine de Bourgh: A narrow-minded, supercilious woman of quality, living at Rosings Park, in Kent. She cannot endure the slightest contradiction, and expects the homage of every one near her.

Miss de Bourgh: Daughter to Lady Catherine. An insignificant young woman, who is intended by her mother to become the wife of Darcy.

Mrs. Gardiner: Wife of Mr. Gardiner. A well-bred pleasant woman, very much attached to her nieces, Jane and Elizabeth Bennet.

Mrs. Hurst: Wife of Mr. Hurst, and sister to Bingley, a supercilious, characterless personage, of slight importance in the conduct of the story.

Lady Lucas: Wife to Sir William Lucas. 'A very good kind of woman, not too clever to be a valuable neighbor to Mrs. Bennet.'

Charlotte: Eldest daughter to the Lucases. A practical young woman, several years older than her friend Elizabeth Bennet. She marries Mr. Collins, and is thereby condemned for the rest of her life to endure his stupidity and Lady Catherine's insolent patronage.

Maria Lucas: Second daughter of the Lucases. A good-humored girl, with 'nothing to say that could be worth hearing.'

Mrs. Jenkinson: Companion to Lady Catherine. An unimportant character, whose life is devoted to attendance upon the whims of Lady Catherine and her daughter.

Mrs. Philips: Sister to Mrs. Bennet, and wife of an attorney in Meryton. A woman as silly as her sister, and who encourages her nieces Lydia and Kitty in all their frivolities.

Mrs. Reynolds: Housekeeper at Pemberley, the Darcy estate.

The scene of the story is mainly in the vicinity of Mr. Bennet's home, near Meryton, but the events of several chapters occur at Rosings in Kent, and at Pemberley in Derbyshire, while the time covered by the action is not far from thirteen months.

PRIDE AND PREJUDICE.

VOLUME THE FIRST.[1]

CHAPTER I.

It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune must be in want of a wife.

However little known the feelings or views of such a man may be on his first entering a neighborhood, this truth is so well fixed in the minds of the surrounding families that he is considered as the rightful property of some one or other of their daughters.

'My dear Mr. Bennet,' said his lady to him one day, 'have you heard that Netherfield Park is let at last?'

Mr. Bennet replied that he had not.

'But it is,' returned she; 'for Mrs. Long has just been here, and she told me all about it.'

Mr. Bennet made no answer.

'Do not you want to know who has taken it?' cried his wife, impatiently.

'*You* want to tell me, and I have no objection to hearing it.'

This was invitation enough.

'Why, my dear, you must know, Mrs. Long says that Netherfield is taken by a young man of large fortune

[1] In the divisions into volumes and chapters, the editor has followed the arrangement of the Steventon edition. The American editions do not divide the novels into volumes, and the chapter numberings are, therefore, continuous.

from the north of England; that he came down on Monday in a chaise and four to see the place, and was so much delighted with it that he agreed with Mr. Morris immediately; that he is to take possession before Michaelmas,[1] and some of his servants are to be in the house by the end of next week.'

'What is his name?'

'Bingley.'

'Is he married, or single?'

'Oh, single, my dear, to be sure! A single man of large fortune; four or five thousand a year. What a fine thing for our girls!'

'How so? How can it affect them?'

'My dear Mr. Bennet,' replied his wife, 'how can you be so tiresome? You must know that I am thinking of his marrying one of them.'

'Is that his design in settling here?'

'Design! nonsense, how can you talk so! But it is very likely that he *may* fall in love with one of them, and therefore you must visit him as soon as he comes.'

'I see no occasion for that. You and the girls may go, or you may send them by themselves, which perhaps will be still better, for, as you are as handsome as any of them, Mr. Bingley might like you the best of the party.'

'My dear, you flatter me. I certainly *have* had my share of beauty, but I do not pretend to be anything extraordinary now. When a woman has five grown-up daughters, she ought to give over thinking of her own beauty.'

'In such cases, a woman has not often much beauty to think of.'

'But, my dear, you must indeed go and see Mr. Bingley when he comes into the neighborhood.'

'It is more than I engage for, I assure you.'

'But consider your daughters. Only think what an

[1] *Michaelmas.* The festival of St. Michael and All Angels, September 29.

establishment it would be for one of them. Sir William and Lady Lucas are determined to go, merely on that account; for in general, you know, they visit no new comers. Indeed, you must go, for it will be impossible for *us* to visit him, if you do not.'

'You are over-scrupulous, surely. I dare say Mr. Bingley will be very glad to see you; and I will send a few lines by you to assure him of my hearty consent to his marrying whichever he chooses of the girls; though I must throw in a good word for my little Lizzy.'

'I desire you will do no such thing. Lizzy is not a bit better than the others; and I am sure she is not half so handsome as Jane, nor half so good-humored as Lydia. But you are always giving *her* the preference.'

'They have none of them much to recommend them,' replied he; 'they are all silly and ignorant, like other girls; but Lizzy has something more of quickness than her sisters.'

'Mr. Bennet, how can you abuse your own children in such a way? You take delight in vexing me. You have no compassion on my poor nerves.'

'You mistake me, my dear. I have a high respect for your nerves. They are my old friends. I have heard you mention them with consideration these twenty years at least.'

'Ah, you do not know what I suffer!'

'But I hope you will get over it, and live to see many young men of four thousand a year come into the neighborhood.'

'It will be no use to us, if twenty such should come, since you will not visit them.'

'Depend upon it, my dear, that when there are twenty, I will visit them all.'

Mr. Bennet was so odd a mixture of quick parts, sarcastic humor, reserve, and caprice, that the experience of three-and-twenty years had been insufficient to make his wife understand his character. *Her* mind was less difficult to develop. She was a woman of mean un-

derstanding, little information, and uncertain temper. When she was discontented she fancied herself nervous. The business of her life was to get her daughters married: its solace was visiting and news.

CHAPTER II.

Mr. Bennet was among the earliest of those who waited on Mr. Bingley. He had always intended to visit him, though to the last always assuring his wife that he should not go; and till the evening after the visit was paid she had no knowledge of it. It was then disclosed in the following manner. Observing his second daughter employed in trimming a hat, he suddenly addressed her with, —

'I hope Mr. Bingley will like it, Lizzy.'

'We are not in a way to know *what* Mr. Bingley likes,' said her mother, resentfully, 'since we are not to visit.'

'But you forget, mamma,' said Elizabeth, 'that we shall meet him at the assemblies, and that Mrs. Long has promised to introduce him.'

'I do not believe Mrs. Long will do any such thing. She has two nieces of her own. She is a selfish, hypocritical woman, and I have no opinion of her.'

'No more have I,' said Mr. Bennet; 'and I am glad to find that you do not depend on her serving you.'

Mrs. Bennet deigned not to make any reply; but, unable to contain herself, began scolding one of her daughters.

'Don't keep coughing so, Kitty, for heaven's sake! have a little compassion on my nerves. You tear them to pieces.'

'Kitty has no discretion in her coughs,' said her father; 'she times them ill.'

'I do not cough for my own amusement,' replied Kitty, fretfully. 'When is your next ball to be, Lizzy?'

'To-morrow fortnight.'

'Ay, so it is,' cried her mother, 'and Mrs. Long does not come back till the day before; so it will be impossible for her to introduce him, for she will not know him herself.'

'Then, my dear, you may have the advantage of your friend, and introduce Mr. Bingley to *her*.'

'Impossible, Mr. Bennet, impossible, when I am not acquainted with him myself; how can you be so teazing?'

'I honor your circumspection. A fortnight's acquaintance is certainly very little. One cannot know what a man really is by the end of a fortnight. But if *we* do not venture, somebody else will; and, after all, Mrs. Long and her nieces must stand their chance; and therefore, as she will think it an act of kindness, if you decline the office I will take it on myself.'

The girls stared at their father. Mrs. Bennet said only, 'Nonsense, nonsense!'

'What can be the meaning of that emphatic exclamation?' cried he. 'Do you consider the forms of introduction, and the stress that is laid on them, as nonsense? I cannot quite agree with you *there*. What say you, Mary? for you are a young lady of deep reflection, I know, and read great books, and make extracts.'

Mary wished to say something very sensible, but knew not how.

'While Mary is adjusting her ideas,' he continued, 'let us return to Mr. Bingley.'

'I am sick of Mr. Bingley,' cried his wife.

'I am sorry to hear *that;* but why did you not tell me so before? If I had known as much this morning, I certainly would not have called on him. It is very

unlucky; but as I have actually paid the visit, we cannot escape the acquaintance now.'

The astonishment of the ladies was just what he wished, — that of Mrs. Bennet, perhaps, surpassing the rest; though when the first tumult of joy was over, she began to declare that it was what she had expected all the while.

'How good it was in you, my dear Mr. Bennet! But I knew I should persuade you at last. I was sure you loved your girls too well to neglect such an acquaintance. Well, how pleased I am! and it is such a good joke, too, that you should have gone this morning and never said a word about it till now.'

'Now, Kitty, you may cough as much as you choose,' said Mr. Bennet; and as he spoke he left the room, fatigued with the raptures of his wife.

'What an excellent father you have, girls!' said she, when the door was shut. 'I do not know how you will ever make him amends for his kindness; or me, either, for that matter. At our time of life it is not so pleasant, I can tell you, to be making new acquaintance every day; but for your sakes we would do anything. Lydia, my love, though you *are* the youngest, I dare say Mr. Bingley will dance with you at the next ball.'

'Oh,' said Lydia, stoutly, 'I am not afraid; for though I *am* the youngest, I'm the tallest.'

The rest of the evening was spent in conjecturing how soon he would return Mr. Bennet's visit, and determining when they should ask him to dinner.

[The next ten chapters contain the account of the growing acquaintance between the Bingley family and the Bennets; the visit of Jane Bennet to Miss Bingley; the illness of the former during her visit; the summoning of Elizabeth Bennet to Netherfield to take care of her; the mutual attraction between Jane Bennet and Bingley; and the prejudice felt by Elizabeth Bennet against Bingley's friend Darcy, who is visiting him.]

CHAPTER XIII.

'I HOPE, my dear,' said Mr. Bennet to his wife, as they were at breakfast the next morning, 'that you have ordered a good dinner to-day, because I have reason to expect an addition to our family party.'

'Who do you mean, my dear? I know of nobody that is coming, I am sure, unless Charlotte Lucas should happen to call in; and I hope *my* dinners are good enough for her. I do not believe she often sees such at home.'

'The person of whom I speak is a gentleman and a stranger.'

Mrs. Bennet's eyes sparkled. 'A gentleman and a stranger! It is Mr. Bingley, I am sure. Why, Jane, you never dropped a word of this, you sly thing! Well, I am sure I shall be extremely glad to see Mr. Bingley. But — good Lord! how unlucky! — there is not a bit of fish to be got to-day. Lydia, my love, ring the bell. I must speak to Hill[1] this moment.'

'It is *not* Mr. Bingley,' said her husband; 'it is a person whom I never saw in the whole course of my life.'

This roused a general astonishment, and he had the pleasure of being eagerly questioned by his wife and five daughters at once.

After amusing himself some time with their curiosity, he thus explained: 'About a month ago I received this letter, and about a fortnight ago I answered it, for I thought it a case of some delicacy and requiring early attention. It is from my cousin, Mr. Collins, who when I am dead may turn you all out of this house as soon as he pleases.'

'Oh, my dear,' cried his wife, 'I cannot bear to hear that mentioned! Pray do not talk of that odious man!

[1] The Bennets' housekeeper.

I do think it is the hardest thing in the world, that your estate should be entailed away from your own children; and I am sure, if I had been you, I should have tried long ago to do something or other about it.'

Jane and Elizabeth attempted to explain to her the nature of an entail. They had often attempted it before, but it was a subject on which Mrs. Bennet was beyond the reach of reason; and she continued to rail bitterly against the cruelty of settling an estate away from a family of five daughters, in favor of a man whom nobody cared anything about.

'It certainly is a most iniquitous affair,' said Mr. Bennet, 'and nothing can clear Mr. Collins from the guilt of inheriting Longbourn. But if you will listen to his letter, you may perhaps be a little softened by his manner of expressing himself.'

'No, that I am sure I shall not; and I think it was very impertinent of him to write to you at all, and very hypocritical. I hate such false friends. Why could he not keep on quarrelling with you, as his father did before him?'

'Why, indeed, he does seem to have had some filial scruples on that head, as you will hear.'

HUNSFORD, NEAR WESTERHAM,[1] KENT, October 15.

DEAR SIR, — The disagreement subsisting between yourself and my late honored father always gave me much uneasiness, and since I had the misfortune to lose him, I have frequently wished to heal the breach; but for some time I was kept back by my own doubts, fearing lest it might seem disrespectful to his memory for me to be on good terms with any one with whom it had always pleased him to be at variance. — 'There, Mrs. Bennet.' — My mind, however, is now made up on the subject; for having received ordination at Easter, I have been so fortunate as to be distinguished by the patronage of the Right Honorable Lady Catherine de Bourgh, widow of Sir Louis de Bourgh, whose bounty and

[1] *Westerham.* A market town twenty-five miles southeast of London.

beneficence have preferred me to the valuable rectory of this parish, where it shall be my earnest endeavor to demean myself with grateful respect towards her ladyship, and be ever ready to perform those rites and ceremonies which are instituted by the Church of England. As a clergyman, moreover, I feel it my duty to promote and establish the blessing of peace in all families within the reach of my influence; and on these grounds I flatter myself that my present overtures of good-will are highly commendable, and that the circumstance of my being next in the entail of Longbourn estate will be kindly overlooked on your side, and not lead you to reject the offered olive-branch. I cannot be otherwise than concerned at being the means of injuring your amiable daughters, and beg leave to apologize for it, as well as to assure you of my readiness to make them every possible amends; but of this hereafter. If you should have no objection to receive me into your house, I propose myself the satisfaction of waiting on you and your family, Monday, November 18, by four o'clock; and shall probably trespass on your hospitality till the Saturday se'nnight[1] following, which I can do without any inconvenience, as Lady Catherine is far from objecting to my occasional absence on a Sunday, provided that some other clergyman is engaged to do the duty of the day. I remain, dear sir, with respectful compliments to your lady and daughters, your well-wisher and friend,

WILLIAM COLLINS.

'At four o'clock, therefore, we may expect this peacemaking gentleman,' said Mr. Bennet, as he folded up the letter. 'He seems to be a most conscientious and polite young man, upon my word; and I doubt not will prove a valuable acquaintance, especially if Lady Catherine should be so indulgent as to let him come to us again. There is some sense in what he says about the girls, however; and if he is disposed to make

[1] *Se'nnight.* Ninety years ago this useful word had not become such a stranger to conversation and literature as at present. Its complement, *fortnight*, a contraction of fourteen night, as *se'nnight* is of seven night, shows, however, no signs of falling into disuse.

them any amends, I shall not be the person to discourage him.'

'Though it is difficult,' said Jane, 'to guess in what way he can mean to make us the atonement he thinks our due, the wish is certainly to his credit.'

Elizabeth was chiefly struck with his extraordinary deference for Lady Catherine, and his kind intention of christening, marrying, and burying his parishioners whenever it were required.

'He must be an oddity, I think,' said she. 'I cannot make him out. There is something very pompous in his style. And what can he mean by apologizing for being next in the entail? We cannot suppose he would help it, if he could. Can he be a sensible man, sir?'

'No, my dear; I think not. I have great hopes of finding him quite the reverse. There is a mixture of servility and self-importance in his letter which promises well. I am impatient to see him.'

'In point of composition,' said Mary, 'his letter does not seem defective. The idea of the olive-branch, perhaps, is not wholly new, yet I think it is well expressed.'

To Catherine and Lydia neither the letter nor its writer was in any degree interesting. It was next to impossible that their cousin should come in a scarlet coat,[1] and it was now some weeks since they had received pleasure from the society of a man in any other color. As for their mother, Mr. Collins's letter had done away much of her ill-will, and she was preparing to see him with a degree of composure which astonished her husband and daughters.

Mr. Collins was punctual to his time, and was received with great politeness by the whole family. Mr. Bennet, indeed, said little; but the ladies were ready enough to talk, and Mr. Collins seemed neither in need

[1] That is, as a British army officer.

of encouragement, nor inclined to be silent himself. He was a tall, heavy-looking young man of five-and-twenty. His air was grave and stately, and his manners were very formal. He had not been long seated before he complimented Mrs. Bennet on having so fine a family of daughters; said he had heard much of their beauty, but that, in this instance, fame had fallen short of the truth; and added that he did not doubt her seeing them all in due time well disposed of in marriage. This gallantry was not much to the taste of some of his hearers; but Mrs. Bennet, who quarrelled with no compliments, answered most readily, —

'You are very kind, sir, I am sure, and I wish with all my heart it may prove so; for else they will be destitute enough, things are settled so oddly.'

'You allude, perhaps, to the entail of this estate.'

'Ah, sir, I do indeed. It is a grievous affair to my poor girls, you must confess. Not that I mean to find fault with *you*, for such things I know are all chance in this world. There is no knowing how estates will go when once they come to be entailed.'

'I am very sensible, madam, of the hardship to my fair cousins, and could say much on the subject, but that I am cautious of appearing forward and precipitate. But I can assure the young ladies that I come prepared to admire them. At present, I will not say more; but perhaps when we are better acquainted — '

He was interrupted by a summons to dinner, and the girls smiled on each other. They were not the only objects of Mr. Collins's admiration. The hall, the dining-room, and all its furniture were examined and praised; and his commendation of everything would have touched Mrs. Bennet's heart, but for the mortifying supposition of his viewing it all as his own future property. The dinner, too, in its turn, was highly admired; and he begged to know to which of his fair cousins the excellence of its cookery was owing. But here he was set right by Mrs. Bennet, who assured him,

with some asperity, that they were very well able to keep a good cook, and that her daughters had nothing to do in the kitchen. He begged pardon for having displeased her. In a softened tone she declared herself not at all offended; but he continued to apologize for about a quarter of an hour.

CHAPTER XIV.

During dinner, Mr. Bennet scarcely spoke at all; but when the servants were withdrawn, he thought it time to have some conversation with his guest, and therefore started a subject in which he expected him to shine, by observing that he seemed very fortunate in his patroness. Lady Catherine de Bourgh's attention to his wishes and consideration for his comfort appeared very remarkable. Mr. Bennet could not have chosen better. Mr. Collins was eloquent in her praise. The subject elevated him to more than usual solemnity of manner, and with a most important aspect, he protested that 'he had never in his life witnessed such behavior in a person of rank, such affability and condescension, as he had himself experienced from Lady Catherine. She had been graciously pleased to approve of both the discourses which he had already had the honor of preaching before her; she had also asked him twice to dine at Rosings, and had sent for him only the Saturday before, to make up her pool of quadrille in the evening. Lady Catherine was reckoned proud by many people, he knew, but *he* had never seen anything but affability in her. She had always spoken to him as she would to any other gentleman; she made not the smallest objection to his joining in the society of the neighborhood, nor to his leaving his parish occasionally for a week or two to visit his relations. She had even condescended to advise him to marry as soon as he could, provided he chose with discretion; and had once

paid him a visit in his humble parsonage, where she had perfectly approved all the alterations he had been making, and had even vouchsafed to suggest some herself, — some shelves in the closet upstairs.'

'That is all very proper and civil, I am sure,' said Mrs. Bennet, 'and I dare say she is a very agreeable woman. It is a pity that great ladies in general are not more like her. Does she live near you, sir?'

'The garden in which stands my humble abode is separated only by a lane from Rosings Park, her Ladyship's residence.'

'I think you said she was a widow, sir? Has she any family?'

'She has one only daughter, the heiress of Rosings, and of very extensive property.'

'Ah!' cried Mrs. Bennet, shaking her head, 'then she is better off than many girls. And what sort of young lady is she? Is she handsome?'

'She is a most charming young lady, indeed. Lady Catherine herself says that in point of true beauty Miss de Bourgh is far superior to the handsomest of her sex, because there is that in her features which marks the young woman of distinguished birth. She is unfortunately of a sickly constitution, which has prevented her making that progress in many accomplishments which she could not otherwise have failed of, as I am informed by the lady who superintended her education, and who still resides with them. But she is perfectly amiable, and often condescends to drive by my humble abode in her little phaeton and ponies.'

'Has she been presented? I do not remember her name among the ladies at court.'

'Her indifferent state of health unhappily prevents her being in town; and by that means, as I told Lady Catherine myself one day, she has deprived the British court of its brightest ornament. Her Ladyship seemed pleased with the idea; and you may imagine that I am happy on every occasion to offer those little

delicate compliments which are always acceptable to ladies. I have more than once observed to Lady Catherine, that her charming daughter seemed born to be a duchess, and that the most elevated rank, instead of giving her consequence, would be adorned by her. These are the kind of little things which please her Ladyship, and it is a sort of attention which I conceive myself peculiarly bound to pay.'

'You judge very properly,' said Mr. Bennet, 'and it is happy for you that you possess the talent of flattering with delicacy. May I ask whether these pleasing attentions proceed from the impulse of the moment, or are the results of previous study?'

'They arise chiefly from what is passing at the time; and though I sometimes amuse myself with suggesting and arranging such little elegant compliments as may be adapted to ordinary occasions, I always wish to give them as unstudied an air as possible.'

Mr. Bennet's expectations were fully answered. His cousin was as absurd as he had hoped, and he listened to him with the keenest enjoyment, maintaining, at the same time, the most resolute composure of countenance, and except in an occasional glance at Elizabeth, requiring no partner in his pleasure.

By tea-time, however, the dose had been enough, and Mr. Bennet was glad to take his guest into the drawing-room again, and when tea was over, glad to invite him to read aloud to the ladies. Mr. Collins readily assented, and a book was produced; but on beholding it (for everything announced it to be from a circulating library), he started back, and begging pardon, protested that he never read novels. Kitty stared at him, and Lydia exclaimed. Other books were produced, and after some deliberation he chose Fordyce's[1] Sermons. Lydia gaped as he opened the

[1] *Fordyce.* James Fordyce (1720–1796) a Scottish writer, author of a once popular collection of *Sermons to Young Women*, which was first published in 1765, and had passed through nine editions by the year 1778.

volume; and before he had, with very monotonous solemnity, read three pages, she interrupted him with, —

'Do you know, mamma, that my uncle Philips talks of turning away Richard? And if he does, Colonel Forster will hire him. My aunt told me so herself on Saturday. I shall walk to Meryton to-morrow to hear more about it, and to ask when Mr. Denny comes back from town.'

Lydia was bid by her two eldest sisters to hold her tongue; but Mr. Collins, much offended, laid aside his book, and said,—

'I have often observed how little young ladies are interested by books of a serious stamp, though written solely for their benefit. It amazes me, I confess; for certainly there can be nothing so advantageous to them as instruction. But I will no longer importune my young cousin.'

Then, turning to Mr. Bennet, he offered himself as his antagonist at backgammon. Mr. Bennet accepted the challenge, observing that he acted very wisely in leaving the girls to their own trifling amusements. Mrs. Bennet and her daughters apologized most civilly for Lydia's interruption, and promised that it should not occur again, if he would resume his book; but Mr. Collins, after assuring them that he bore his young cousin no ill-will, and should never resent her behavior as any affront, seated himself at another table with Mr. Bennet, and prepared for backgammon.

[Chapters XV. — XVIII. are concerned with the visit of Mr. Collins to Longbourn; the acquaintance of the Bennets with Wickham, who deepens Elizabeth's feelings against Darcy by a pretended account of the latter's injustice to him; and the ball given by the Bingleys at Netherfield, which the Bennets and Lucases attended.]

CHAPTER XIX.

THE next day opened a new scene at Longbourn. Mr. Collins made his declaration in form. Having resolved to do it without loss of time, as his leave of absence extended only to the following Saturday, and having no feelings of diffidence to make it distressing to himself even at the moment, he set about it in a very orderly manner, with all the observances which he supposed a regular part of the business. On finding Mrs. Bennet, Elizabeth, and one of the younger girls together, soon after breakfast, he addressed the mother in these words: —

'May I hope, madam, for your interest with your fair daughter Elizabeth, when I solicit for the honor of a private audience with her in the course of this morning?'

Before Elizabeth had time for anything but a blush of surprise, Mrs. Bennet instantly answered, —

'Oh, dear! Yes, certainly. I am sure Lizzy will be very happy — I am sure she can have no objection. Come, Kitty, I want you upstairs.' And gathering her work together, she was hastening away, when Elizabeth called out, —

'Dear ma'am, do not go. I beg you will not go. Mr. Collins must excuse me. He can have nothing to say to me that anybody need not hear. I am going away myself.'

'No, no, nonsense, Lizzy. I desire you will stay where you are.' And upon Elizabeth's seeming really, with vexed and embarrassed looks, about to escape, she added, 'Lizzy, I *insist* upon your staying and hearing Mr. Collins.'

Elizabeth would not oppose such an injunction; and a moment's consideration making her also sensible that it would be wisest to get it over as soon and as quietly as possible, she sat down again, and tried to conceal, by incessant employment, the feelings which were

divided between distress and diversion. Mrs. Bennet and Kitty walked off, and as soon as they were gone, Mr. Collins began: —

'Believe me, my dear Miss Elizabeth, that your modesty, so far from doing you any dis-service, rather adds to your other perfections. You would have been less amiable in my eyes had there *not* been this little unwillingness; but allow me to assure you that I have your respected mother's permission for this address. You can hardly doubt the purport of my discourse, however your natural delicacy may lead you to dissemble; my attentions have been too marked to be mistaken. Almost as soon as I entered the house, I singled you out as the companion of my future life. But before I am run away with by my feelings on this subject, perhaps it will be advisable for me to state my reasons for marrying, — and, moreover, for coming into Hertfordshire with the design of selecting a wife, as I certainly did.'

The idea of Mr. Collins, with all his solemn composure, being run away with by his feelings, made Elizabeth so near laughing, that she could not use the short pause he allowed in any attempt to stop him further, and he continued: —

'My reasons for marrying are, first, that I think it a right thing for every clergyman in easy circumstances, like myself, to set the example of matrimony in his parish; secondly, that I am convinced it will add very greatly to my happiness; and thirdly, which perhaps I ought to have mentioned earlier, that it is the particular advice and recommendation of the very noble lady whom I have the honor of calling patroness. Twice has she condescended to give me her opinion (unasked, too!) on this subject; and it was but the very Saturday night before I left Hunsford, — between our pools at quadrille,[1] while Mrs. Jenkinson was

[1] *Quadrille.* A game played by four persons with forty cards, being the remainder of the pack after discarding the four tens, eights, and nines.

arranging Miss de Bourgh's footstool. — that she said, "Mr. Collins, you must marry. A clergyman like you must marry. Choose properly, choose a gentlewoman, for *my* sake, and for your *own;* let her be an active, useful sort of person, not brought up high, but able to make a small income go a good way. This is my advice. Find such a woman as soon as you can, bring her to Hunsford, and I will visit her." Allow me, by the way, to observe, my fair cousin, that I do not reckon the notice and kindness of Lady Catherine de Bourgh as among the least of the advantages in my power to offer. You will find her manners beyond anything I can describe; and your wit and vivacity, I think, must be acceptable to her, especially when tempered with the silence and respect which her rank will inevitably excite. Thus much for my general intention in favor of matrimony; it remains to be told why my views were directed to Longbourn instead of my own neighborhood, where, I assure you, there are many amiable young women. But the fact is, that being as I am to inherit this estate after the death of your honored father (who, however, may live many years longer), I could not satisfy myself without resolving to choose a wife from among his daughters, that the loss to them might be as little as possible when the melancholy event takes place, which, however, as I have already said, may not be for several years. This has been my motive, my fair cousin, and I flatter myself it will not sink me in your esteem. And now nothing remains for me but to assure you, in the most animated language, of the violence of my affection. To fortune I am perfectly indifferent, and shall make no demand of that nature on your father, since I am well aware that it could not be complied with; and that one thousand pounds in the 4 per cents, which will not be yours till after your mother's decease, is all that you may ever be entitled to. On that head, therefore, I shall be uniformly silent: and you may assure yourself that

no ungenerous reproach shall ever pass my lips when we are married.'

It was absolutely necessary to interrupt him now.

'You are too hasty, sir,' she cried. 'You forget that I have made no answer. Let me do it without further loss of time. Accept my thanks for the compliment you are paying me. I am very sensible of the honor of your proposals, but it is impossible for me to do otherwise than decline them.'

'I am not now to learn,' replied Mr. Collins, with a formal wave of the hand, 'that it is usual with young ladies to reject the addresses of the man whom they secretly mean to accept, when he first applies for their favor; and that sometimes the refusal is repeated a second or even a third time. I am, therefore, by no means discouraged by what you have just said, and shall hope to lead you to the altar ere long.'

'Upon my word, sir,' cried Elizabeth, 'your hope is rather an extraordinary one, after my declaration. I do assure you that I am not one of those young ladies (if such young ladies there are) who are so daring as to risk their happiness on the chance of being asked a second time. I am perfectly serious in my refusal. You could not make *me* happy, and I am convinced that I am the last woman in the world who would make *you* so. Nay, were your friend Lady Catherine to know me, I am persuaded she would find me in every respect ill qualified for the situation.'

'Were it certain that Lady Catherine would think so,' said Mr. Collins, very gravely, — 'but I cannot imagine that her Ladyship would at all disprove of you. And you may be certain that when I have the honor of seeing her again, I shall speak in the highest terms of your modesty, economy, and other amiable qualifications.'

'Indeed, Mr. Collins, all praise of me will be unnecessary. You must give me leave to judge for myself, and pay me the compliment of believing what

I say. I wish you very happy and very rich, and by refusing your hand, do all in my power to prevent your being otherwise. In making me the offer, you must have satisfied the delicacy of your feelings with regard to my family, and may take possession of Longbourn estate whenever it falls, without any self-reproach. This matter may be considered, therefore, as finally settled.' And rising as she thus spoke, she would have quitted the room, had not Mr. Collins thus addressed her: —

'When I do myself the honor of speaking to you next on the subject, I shall hope to receive a more favorable answer than you have now given me; though I am far from accusing you of cruelty at present, because I know it to be the established custom of your sex to reject a man on the first application, and perhaps you have even now said as much to encourage my suit as would be consistent with the true delicacy of the female character.'

'Really, Mr. Collins,' cried Elizabeth, with some warmth, 'you puzzle me exceedingly. If what I have hitherto said can appear to you in the form of encouragement, I know not how to express my refusal in such a way as may convince you of its being one.'

'You must give me leave to flatter myself, my dear cousin, that your refusals of my addresses are merely words of course. My reasons for believing it are briefly these: It does not appear to me that my hand is unworthy your acceptance, or that the establishment I can offer would be any other than highly desirable. My situation in life, my connections with the family of De Bourgh, and my relationship to your own, are circumstances highly in my favor; and you should take it into further consideration that, in spite of your manifold attractions, it is by no means certain that another offer of marriage may ever be made you. Your portion is unhappily so small, that it will in all likelihood undo the effects of your loveliness and amiable qualifications.

As I must therefore conclude that you are not serious in your rejection of me, I shall choose to attribute it to your wish of increasing my love by suspense, according to the usual practice of elegant females.'

'I do assure you, sir, that I have no pretensions whatever to that kind of elegance which consists in tormenting a respectable man. I would rather be paid the compliment of being believed sincere. I thank you again and again for the honor you have done me in your proposals, but to accept them is absolutely impossible. My feelings in every respect forbid it. Can I speak plainer? Do not consider me now as an elegant female intending to plague you, but as a rational creature speaking the truth from her heart.'

'You are uniformly charming!' cried he, with an air of awkward gallantry; 'and I am persuaded that when sanctioned by the express authority of both your excellent parents, my proposals will not fail of being acceptable.'

To such perseverance in wilful self-deception Elizabeth would make no reply, and immediately and in silence withdrew; determined that if he persisted in considering her repeated refusals as flattering encouragement, to apply to her father, whose negative might be uttered in such a manner as must be decisive, and whose behavior at least could not be mistaken for the affectation and coquetry of an elegant female.

CHAPTER XX.

Mr. Collins was not left long to the silent contemplation of his successful love; for Mrs. Bennet, having dawdled about in the vestibule to watch for the end of the conference, no sooner saw Elizabeth open the door and with a quick step pass her towards the staircase, than she entered the breakfast-room, and congratulated both him and herself in warm terms on the happy pros-

pect of their nearer connection. Mr. Collins received and returned these felicitations with equal pleasure, and then proceeded to relate the particulars of their interview, with the result of which he trusted he had every reason to be satisfied, since the refusal which his cousin had steadfastly given him would naturally flow from her bashful modesty and the genuine delicacy of her character.

This information, however, startled Mrs. Bennet; she would have been glad to be equally satisfied that her daughter had meant to encourage him by protesting against his proposals, but she dared not to believe it, and could not help saying so.

'But depend upon it, Mr. Collins,' she added, 'that Lizzy shall be brought to reason. I will speak to her about it myself directly. She is a very headstrong, foolish girl, and does not know her own interest; but I will *make* her know it.'

'Pardon me for interrupting you, madam,' cried Mr. Collins; 'but if she is really headstrong and foolish, I know not whether she would altogether be a very desirable wife to a man in my situation, who naturally looks for happiness in the marriage state. If, therefore, she actually persists in rejecting my suit, perhaps it were better not to force her into accepting me, because if liable to such defects of temper she could not contribute much to my felicity.'

'Sir, you quite misunderstand me,' said Mrs. Bennet, alarmed. 'Lizzy is only headstrong in such matters as these. In everything else she is as good-natured a girl as ever lived. I will go directly to Mr. Bennet, and we shall very soon settle it with her, I am sure.'

She would not give him time to reply, but hurrying instantly to her husband, called out as she entered the library, —

'Oh, Mr. Bennet, you are wanted immediately; we are all in an uproar. You must come and make Lizzy marry Mr. Collins, for she vows she will not have him,

and if you do not make haste he will change his mind and not have *her*.'

Mr. Bennet raised his eyes from his book as she entered, and fixed them on her face with a calm unconcern, which was not in the least altered by her communication.

'I have not the pleasure of understanding you,' said he, when she had finished her speech. 'Of what are you talking?'

'Of Mr. Collins and Lizzy. Lizzy declares she will not have Mr. Collins, and Mr. Collins begins to say that he will not have Lizzy.'

'And what am I to do on the occasion? It seems a hopeless business.'

'Speak to Lizzy about it yourself. Tell her that you insist upon her marrying him.'

'Let her be called down. She shall hear my opinion.'

Mrs. Bennet rang the bell, and Miss Elizabeth was summoned to the library.

'Come here, child,' cried her father, as she appeared. 'I have sent for you on an affair of importance. I understand that Mr. Collins has made you an offer of marriage. Is it true?' Elizabeth replied that it was. 'Very well; and this offer of marriage you have refused?'

'I have, sir.'

'Very well. We now come to the point. Your mother insists upon your accepting it. Is it not so, Mrs. Bennet?'

'Yes, or I will never see her again.'

'An unhappy alternative is before you, Elizabeth. From this day you must be a stranger to one of your parents. Your mother will never see you again if you do not marry Mr. Collins, and I will never see you again if you *do*.'

Elizabeth could not but smile at such a conclusion of such a beginning; but Mrs. Bennet, who had persuaded

herself that her husband regarded the affair as she wished, was excessively disappointed.

'What do you mean, Mr. Bennet, by talking in this way? You promised me to *insist* upon her marrying him.'

'My dear,' replied her husband, 'I have two small favors to request: first, that you will allow me the free use of my understanding on the present occasion; and secondly, of my room. I shall be glad to have the library to myself as soon as may be.'

Not yet, however, in spite of her disappointment in her husband, did Mrs. Bennet give up the point. She talked to Elizabeth again and again; coaxed and threatened her by turns. She endeavored to secure Jane in her interest, but Jane, with all possible mildness, declined interfering; and Elizabeth sometimes with real earnestness, and sometimes with playful gayety, replied to her attacks. Though her manner varied, however, her determination never did.

Mr. Collins, meanwhile, was meditating in solitude on what had passed. He thought too well of himself to comprehend on what motive his cousin could refuse him; and though his pride was hurt, he suffered in no other way. His regard for her was quite imaginary; and the possibility of her deserving her mother's reproach prevented his feeling any regret.

While the family were in this confusion, Charlotte Lucas came to spend the day with them. She was met in the vestibule by Lydia, who, flying to her, cried in a half whisper, 'I am glad you are come, for there is such fun here! What do you think has happened this morning? Mr. Collins has made an offer to Lizzy, and she will not have him.'

Charlotte had hardly time to answer before they were joined by Kitty, who came to tell the same news; and no sooner had they entered the breakfast-room, where Mrs. Bennet was alone, than she likewise began on the subject, calling on Miss Lucas for her compassion, and

entreating her to persuade her friend Lizzy to comply with the wishes of all her family. 'Pray do, my dear Miss Lucas,' she added, in a melancholy tone, 'for nobody is on my side; nobody takes part with me; I am cruelly used; nobody feels for my poor nerves.'

Charlotte's reply was spared by the entrance of Jane and Elizabeth.

'Ay, there she comes,' continued Mrs. Bennet, 'looking as unconcerned as may be, and caring no more for us than if we were at York, provided she can have her own way. But I tell you what, Miss Lizzy, if you take it into your head to go on refusing every offer of marriage in this way, you will never get a husband at all; and I am sure I do not know who is to maintain you when your father is dead. I shall not be able to keep you; and so I warn you. I have done with you from this very day; I told you in the library, you know, that I should never speak to you again, and you will find me as good as my word. I have no pleasure in talking to undutiful children. Not that I have much pleasure, indeed, in talking to anybody. People who suffer as I do from nervous complaints, can have no great inclination for talking. Nobody can tell what I suffer! But it is always so. Those who do not complain are never pitied.'

Her daughters listened in silence to this effusion, sensible that any attempt to reason with or soothe her would only increase the irritation. She talked on, therefore, without interruption from any of them, till they were joined by Mr. Collins, who entered with an air more stately than usual, and on perceiving whom, she said to the girls, —

'Now I do insist upon it that you all of you hold your tongues, and let Mr. Collins and me have a little conversation together.'

Elizabeth passed quietly out of the room, Jane and Kitty followed, but Lydia stood her ground, determined to hear all she could; and Charlotte, detained first by

the civility of Mr. Collins, whose inquiries after herself and all her family were very minute, and then by a little curiosity, satisfied herself with walking to the window and pretending not to hear. In a doleful voice Mrs. Bennet thus began the projected conversation, 'Oh, Mr. Collins —'

'My dear madam,' replied he, 'let us be forever silent on this point. Far be it from me,' he presently continued, in a voice that marked his displeasure, 'to resent the behavior of your daughter. Resignation to inevitable evils is the duty of us all, — the peculiar duty of a young man who has been so fortunate as I have been in early preferment; and I trust I am resigned. Perhaps not the less so from feeling a doubt of my positive happiness, had my fair cousin honored me with her hand; for I have often observed that resignation is never so perfect as when the blessing denied begins to lose somewhat of its value in our estimation. You will not, I hope, consider me as showing any disrespect to your family, my dear madam, by thus withdrawing my pretensions to your daughter's favor without having paid yourself and Mr. Bennet the compliment of requesting you to interpose your authority in my behalf. My conduct may, I fear, be objectionable in having accepted my dismission from your daughter's lips instead of your own, but we are all liable to error. I have certainly meant well through the whole affair. My object has been to secure an amiable companion for myself, with due consideration for the advantage of all your family; and if my *manner* has been at all reprehensible, I here beg leave to apologize.'

[The remainder of the first volume relates the successful proposal of Mr. Collins to Miss Charlotte Lucas a couple of days later; their marriage and removal to his home; Elizabeth's subsequent visit to them, and her frequent meetings with Lady Catherine de Bourgh at Rosings Park, near the Collins's. At Lady Catherine's, Elizabeth meets that lady's nephews, Darcy and Colonel Fitzwilliam, and her dislike of the former increases when she learns that he has used his influence to discourage Bingley's attentions to Jane Bennet.]

PRIDE AND PREJUDICE.

VOLUME THE SECOND.

CHAPTER I.

When they were gone, Elizabeth, as if intending to exasperate herself as much as possible against Mr. Darcy, chose for her employment the examination of all the letters which Jane had written to her since her being in Kent. They contained no actual complaint, nor was there any revival of past occurrences, or any communication of present suffering. But in all, and in almost every line of each, there was a want of that cheerfulness which had been used to characterize her style, and which, proceeding from the serenity of a mind at ease with itself. and kindly disposed towards every one, had been scarcely ever clouded. Elizabeth noticed every sentence conveying the idea of uneasiness, with an attention which it hardly received on the first perusal. Mr. Darcy's shameful boast of what misery he had been able to inflict, gave her a keener sense of her sister's sufferings. It was some consolation to think that his visit to Rosings was to end on the day after the next, and a still greater, that in less than a fortnight she should herself be with Jane again, and enabled to contribute to the recovery of her spirits, by all that affection could do.

She could not think of Darcy's leaving Kent, without remembering that his cousin was to go with him; but Colonel Fitzwilliam had made it clear that he had no intentions at all, and agreeable as he was, she did not mean to be unhappy about him.

While settling this point, she was suddenly roused by the sound of the door-bell, and her spirits were a little fluttered by the idea of its being Colonel Fitzwilliam himself, who had once before called late in the evening, and might now come to inquire particularly after her. But this idea was soon banished, and her spirits were very differently affected, when, to her utter amazement, she saw Mr. Darcy walk into the room. In a hurried manner he immediately began an inquiry after her health, imputing his visit to a wish of hearing that she were better. She answered him with cold civility. He sat down for a few moments, and then getting up walked about the room. Elizabeth was surprised, but said not a word. After a silence of several minutes he came towards her in an agitated manner, and thus began: —

'In vain have I struggled. It will not do. My feelings will not be repressed. You must allow me to tell you how ardently I admire and love you.'

Elizabeth's astonishment was beyond expression. She started, colored, doubted, and was silent. This he considered sufficient encouragement, and the avowal of all that he felt, and had long felt for her, immediately followed. He spoke well, but there were feelings besides those of the heart to be detailed, and he was not more eloquent on the subject of tenderness than of pride. His sense of her inferiority, of its being a degradation, of the family obstacles which judgment had always opposed to inclination, were dwelt on with a warmth which seemed due to the consequence he was wounding, but was very unlikely to recommend his suit.

In spite of her deeply-rooted dislike, she could not be insensible to the compliment of such a man's affection, and though her intentions did not vary for an instant, she was at first sorry for the pain he was to receive; till roused to resentment by his subsequent language, she lost all compassion in anger. She tried, however, to compose herself to answer him with pa-

tience when he should have done. He concluded with representing to her the strength of that attachment which, in spite of all his endeavors, he had found impossible to conquer, and with expressing his hope that it would now be rewarded by her acceptance of his hand. As he said this, she could easily see that he had no doubt of a favorable answer. He *spoke* of apprehension and anxiety, but his countenance expressed real security. Such a circumstance could only exasperate further, and when he ceased the color rose into her cheeks, and she said, —

'In such cases as this, it is, I believe, the established mode to express a sense of obligation for the sentiments avowed, however unequally they may be returned. It is natural that obligation should be felt, and if I could *feel* gratitude, I would now thank you. But I cannot; I have never desired your good opinion, and you have certainly bestowed it most unwillingly. I am sorry to have occasioned pain to any one. It has been most unconsciously done, however, and I hope will be of short duration. The feelings which, you tell me, have long prevented the acknowledgment of your regard, can have little difficulty in overcoming it after this explanation.'

Mr. Darcy, who was leaning against the mantelpiece, with his eyes fixed on her face, seemed to catch her words with no less resentment than surprise. His complexion became pale with anger, and the disturbance of his mind was visible in every feature. He was struggling for the appearance of composure, and would not open his lips till he believed himself to have attained it. The pause was to Elizabeth's feelings dreadful. At length, in a voice of forced calmness, he said:

'And this is all the reply which I am to have the honor of expecting! I might, perhaps, wish to be informed why, with so little *endeavor* at civility, I am thus rejected. But it is of small importance.'

'I might as well inquire,' replied she, 'why, with so

evident a design of offending and insulting me, you chose to tell me that you liked me against your will, against your reason, and even against your character? Was not this some excuse for incivility, if I *was* uncivil? But I have other provocations. You know I have. Had not my own feelings decided against you, had they been indifferent, or had they even been favorable, do you think that any consideration would tempt me to accept the man who has been the means of ruining, perhaps forever, the happiness of a most beloved sister?'

As she pronounced these words, Mr. Darcy changed color; but the emotion was short, and he listened without attempting to interrupt her, while she continued:

'I have every reason in the world to think ill of you. No motive can excuse the unjust and ungenerous part you acted *there*. You dare not, you cannot, deny that you have been the principal, if not the only, means of dividing them from each other, of exposing one to the censure of the world for caprice and instability, the other to its derision for disappointed hopes, and involving them both in misery of the acutest kind.'

She paused, and saw with no slight indignation that he was listening with an air which proved him wholly unmoved by any feeling of remorse. He even looked at her with a smile of affected incredulity.

'Can you deny that you have done it?' she repeated.

With assumed tranquillity he then replied: 'I have no wish of denying that I did everything in my power to separate my friend from your sister, or that I rejoice in my success. Towards *him* I have been kinder than towards myself.'

Elizabeth disdained the appearance of noticing this civil reflection, but its meaning did not escape, nor was it likely to conciliate her.

'But it is not merely this affair,' she continued, 'on which my dislike is founded. Long before it had taken place, my opinion of you was decided. Your character

was unfolded in the recital which I received many months ago from Mr. Wickham. On this subject, what can you have to say? In what imaginary act of friendship can you here defend yourself, or under what misrepresentation can you here impose upon others?

'You take an eager interest in that gentleman's concerns,' said Darcy, in a less tranquil tone, and with a heightened color.

'Who that knows what his misfortunes have been, can help feeling an interest in him?'

'His misfortunes!' repeated Darcy, contemptuously, — 'yes, his misfortunes have been great indeed.'

'And of your infliction,' cried Elizabeth, with energy. 'You have reduced him to his present state of poverty, — comparative poverty. You have withheld the advantages which you must know to have been designed for him. You have deprived the best years of his life of that independence which was no less his due than his desert. You have done all this, and yet you can treat the mention of his misfortunes with contempt and ridicule.'

'And this,' cried Darcy, as he walked with quick steps across the room, 'is your opinion of me! This is the estimation in which you hold me! I thank you for explaining it so fully. My faults, according to this calculation, are heavy indeed! But perhaps,' added he, stopping in his walk, and turning towards her, 'these offences might have been overlooked, had not your pride been hurt by my honest confession of the scruples that had long prevented my forming any serious design. These bitter accusations might have been suppressed, had I, with greater policy, concealed my struggles, and flattered you into the belief of my being impelled by unqualified, unalloyed inclination; by reason, by reflection, by everything. But disguise of every sort is my abhorrence. Nor am I ashamed of the feelings I related. They were natural and just. Could you expect me to rejoice in the inferiority of

your connections; to congratulate myself on the hope of relations whose condition in life is so decidedly beneath my own?'

Elizabeth felt herself growing more angry every moment; yet she tried to the utmost to speak with composure when she said, —

'You are mistaken, Mr. Darcy, if you suppose that the mode of your declaration affected me in any other way than as it spared me the concern which I might have felt in refusing you had you behaved in a more gentlemanlike manner.'

She saw him start at this, but he said nothing; and she continued, —

'You could not have made me the offer of your hand in any possible way that would have tempted me to accept it.'

Again his astonishment was obvious; and he looked at her with an expression of mingled incredulity and mortification. She went on, —

'From the very beginning, from the first moment, I may almost say, of my acquaintance with you, your manners impressing me with the fullest belief of your arrogance, your conceit, and your selfish disdain of the feelings of others, were such as to form that ground-work of disapprobation on which succeeding events have built so immovable a dislike; and I had not known you a month before I felt that you were the last man in the world whom I could ever be prevailed on to marry.'

'You have said quite enough, madam. I perfectly comprehend your feelings, and have now only to be ashamed of what my own have been. Forgive me for having taken up so much of your time, and accept my best wishes for your health and happiness.'

And with these words he hastily left the room, and Elizabeth heard him the next moment open the front door and quit the house. The tumult of her mind was now painfully great. She knew not how to support herself, and from actual weakness sat down and cried

for half an hour. Her astonishment, as she reflected on what had passed, was increased by every review of it. That she should receive an offer of marriage from Mr. Darcy; that he should have been in love with her for so many months, — so much in love as to wish to marry her in spite of all the objections which had made him prevent his friend's marrying her sister, and which must appear at least with equal force in his own case, was almost incredible! It was gratifying to have inspired unconsciously so strong an affection. But his pride, his abominable pride, his shameless avowal of what he had done with respect to Jane, his unpardonable assurance in acknowledging though he could not justify it, and the unfeeling manner in which he had mentioned Mr. Wickham, his cruelty towards whom he had not attempted to deny, soon overcame the pity which the consideration of his attachment had for a moment excited.

She continued in very agitating reflections till the sound of Lady Catherine's carriage made her feel how unequal she was to encounter Charlotte's observation, and hurried her away to her room.

[Chapters II.–XXII. of the second volume contain the letter in which Darcy justifies his treatment of Wickham to Elizabeth; the account of the remainder of her visit to the Collins's; her return home; her journey with her relatives the Gardiners, in the course of which she accidentally meets with Darcy, and comes to lose much of her former prejudice against him; the elopement of Lydia Bennet and Wickham from Brighton; their marriage; the return of Bingley to Netherfield, and his engagement to Jane Bennet.]

CHAPTER XXIII.

One morning, about a week after Bingley's engagement with Jane had been formed, as he and the females of the family were sitting together in the dining-room, their attention was suddenly drawn to the window by the sound of a carriage; and they perceived a chaise

and four driving up the lawn. It was too early in the morning for visitors, and besides, the equipage did not answer to that of any of their neighbors. The horses were post; and neither the carriage nor the livery of the servant who preceded it were familiar to them. As it was certain, however, that somebody was coming, Bingley instantly prevailed on Miss Bennet to avoid the confinement of such an intrusion, and walk away with him into the shrubbery. They both set off, and the conjectures of the remaining three continued, though with little satisfaction, till the door was thrown open, and their visitor entered. It was Lady Catherine de Bourgh.

They were, of course, all intending to be surprised: but their astonishment was beyond their expectation; and on the part of Mrs. Bennet and Kitty, though she was perfectly unknown to them, even inferior to what Elizabeth felt.

She entered the room with an air more than usually ungracious, made no other reply to Elizabeth's salutation than a slight inclination of the head, and sat down without saying a word. Elizabeth. had mentioned her name to her mother on her Ladyship's entrance, though no request of introduction had been made.

Mrs. Bennet, all amazement, though flattered by having a guest of such high importance, received her with the utmost politeness. After sitting for a moment in silence, she said very stiffly to Elizabeth, —

'I hope you are well, Miss Bennet. That lady, I suppose, is your mother?'

Elizabeth replied very concisely that she was.

'And *that*, I suppose, is one of your sisters?'

'Yes, madam,' said Mrs. Bennet, delighted to speak to Lady Catherine. 'She is my youngest girl but one. My youngest of all is lately married, and my eldest is somewhere about the ground, walking with a young man, who, I believe, will soon become a part of the family.'

'You have a very small park here,' returned Lady Catherine, after a short silence.

'It is nothing in comparison of Rosings, my Lady, I dare say; but I assure you it is much larger than Sir William Lucas's.'

'This must be a most inconvenient sitting-room for the evening in summer: the windows are full west.'

Mrs. Bennet assured her that they never sat there after dinner; and then added, —

'May I take the liberty of asking your Ladyship whether you left Mr. and Mrs. Collins well?'

'Yes, very well. I saw them the night before last.'

Elizabeth now expected that she would produce a letter for her from Charlotte, as it seemed the only probable motive for her calling. But no letter appeared, and she was completely puzzled.

Mrs. Bennet, with great civility, begged her Ladyship to take some refreshment; but Lady Catherine very resolutely, and not very politely, declined eating anything; and then, rising up, said to Elizabeth, —

'Miss Bennet, there seemed to be a prettyish kind of a little wilderness[1] on one side of your lawn. I should be glad to take a turn in it, if you will favor me with your company.'

'Go, my dear,' cried her mother, 'and show her Ladyship about the different walks. I think she will be pleased with the hermitage.'

Elizabeth obeyed, and running into her own room for her parasol, attended her noble guest downstairs. As they passed through the hall, Lady Catherine opened the doors into the dining-parlor and drawing-room, and pronouncing them, after a short survey, to be decent-looking rooms, walked on.[2]

[1] *Wilderness.* A term formerly given to a part of a garden purposely left to take care of itself, and where shrubs and plants might grow in untamed luxuriance.

[2] Lady Catherine's insolence of manner has been considered by some critics as much exaggerated; but it must be borne in mind

Her carriage remained at the door, and Elizabeth saw that her waiting-woman was in it. They proceeded in silence along the gravel walk that led to the copse; Elizabeth was determined to make no effort for conversation with a woman who was now more than usually insolent and disagreeable.

'How could I ever think her like her nephew?' thought she, as she looked in her face.

As soon as they entered the copse Lady Catherine began in the following manner: —

'You can be at no loss, Miss Bennet, to understand the reason of my journey hither. Your own heart, your own conscience, must tell you why I come.'

Elizabeth looked with unaffected astonishment.

'Indeed, you are mistaken, madam; I have not been at all able to account for the honor of seeing you here.'

'Miss Bennet,' replied her Ladyship, in an angry tone, 'you ought to know that I am not to be trifled with. But however insincere *you* may choose to be, you shall not find *me* so. My character has ever been celebrated for its sincerity and frankness and in a cause of such moment as this I shall certainly not depart from it. A report of a most alarming nature reached me two days ago. I was told that not only your sister was on the point of being most advantageously married, but that *you*, that Miss Elizabeth Bennet, would in all likelihood be soon afterwards united to my nephew, my own nephew, Mr. Darcy. Though I *know* it must be a scandalous falsehood, though I would not injure him so much as to suppose the truth of it possible, I instantly resolved on setting off for this place, that I might make my sentiments known to you.'

that she was a narrow-minded person with an overweening sense of her own importance, and that she was in the company of people whom she regarded as immeasurably her inferiors in social position. To the arrogance and impertinence of such a woman under these circumstances the endurance of her victims could be the only limit.

'If you believed it impossible to be true,' said Elizabeth, coloring with astonishment and disdain, 'I wonder you took the trouble of coming so far. What could your Ladyship propose by it?'

'At once to insist upon having such a report universally contradicted.'

'Your coming to Longbourn to see me and my family,' said Elizabeth, coolly, 'will be rather a confirmation of it; if indeed, such a report be in existence.'

'If! Do you then pretend to be ignorant of it? Has it not been industriously circulated by yourselves? Do you not know that such a report is spread abroad?'

'I never heard that it was.'

'And can you likewise declare that there is no *foundation* for it?'

'I do not pretend to possess equal frankness with your Ladyship. *You* may ask questions which *I* shall not choose to answer.'

'This is not to be borne. Miss Bennet, I insist on being satisfied. Has he, has my nephew, made you an offer of marriage?'

'Your Ladyship has declared it to be impossible.'

'It ought to be so; it must be so, while he retains the use of his reason. But *your* arts and allurements may, in a moment of infatuation, have made him forget what he owes to himself and to all his family. You may have drawn him in.'

'If I have, I shall be the last person to confess it.'

'Miss Bennet, do you know who I am? I have not been accustomed to such language as this. I am almost the nearest relation he has in the world, and am entitled to know all his dearest concerns.'

'But you are not entitled to know *mine;* nor will such behavior as this ever induce me to be explicit.'

'Let me be rightly understood. This match to which you have the presumption to aspire, can never take place; no, never. Mr. Darcy is engaged to *my daughter*. Now, what have you to say?'

'Only this, — that if he is so, you can have no reason to suppose he will make an offer to me.'

Lady Catherine hesitated for a moment, and then replied, —

'The engagement between them is of a peculiar kind. From their infancy they have been intended for each other. It was the favorite wish of *his* mother, as well as of hers. While in their cradles we planned the union; and now, at the moment when the wishes of both sisters would be accomplished in their marriage, to be prevented by a young woman of inferior birth, of no importance in the world, and wholly unallied to the family! Do you pay no regard to the wishes of his friends; to his tacit engagement with Miss de Bourgh? Are you lost to every feeling of propriety and delicacy? Have you not heard me say that from his earliest hours he was destined for his cousin?'

'Yes; and I had heard it before. But what is that to me? If there is no other objection to my marrying your nephew, I shall certainly not be kept from it by knowing that his mother and aunt wished him to marry Miss de Bourgh. You both did as much as you could, in planning the marriage. Its completion depended on others. If Mr. Darcy is neither by honor nor inclination confined to his cousin, why is not he to make another choice; and if I am that choice, why may not I accept him?'

'Because honor, decorum, prudence, nay, interest, forbid it. Yes, Miss Bennet, interest; for do not expect to be noticed by his family or friends if you wilfully act against the inclinations of all. You will be censured, slighted, and despised by every one connected with him. Your alliance will be a disgrace; your name will never even be mentioned by any of us.'

'These are heavy misfortunes,' replied Elizabeth. 'But the wife of Mr. Darcy must have such extraordinary sources of happiness necessarily attached to

her situation, that she could upon the whole have no cause to repine.'

'Obstinate, headstrong girl! I am ashamed of you! Is this your gratitude for my attentions to you last spring? Is nothing due to me on that score? Let us sit down. You are to understand, Miss Bennet, that I came here with the determined resolution of carrying my purpose; nor will I be dissuaded from it. I have not been used to submit to any person's whims. I have not been in the habit of brooking disappointment.'

'*That* will make your Ladyship's situation at present more pitiable; but it will have no effect on *me*.'

'I will not be interrupted! Hear me in silence. My daughter and my nephew are formed for each other. They are descended, on the maternal side, from the same noble line; and on the father's, from respectable, honorable, and ancient, though untitled, families. Their fortune on both sides is splendid. They are destined for each other by the voice of every member of their respective houses; and what is to divide them? The upstart pretensions of a young woman without family, connections, or fortune. Is this to be endured? But it must not, shall not be! If you were sensible of your own good, you would not wish to quit the sphere in which you have been brought up.'

'In marrying your nephew I should not consider myself as quitting that sphere. He is a gentleman; I am a gentleman's daughter; so far we are equal.'

'True. You *are* a gentleman's daughter. But who was your mother? Who are your uncles and aunts? Do not imagine me ignorant of their condition.'

'Whatever my connections may be,' said Elizabeth, 'if your nephew does not object to them, they can be nothing to *you*.'

'Tell me, once for all, are you engaged to him?'

Though Elizabeth would not, for the mere purpose of obliging Lady Catherine, have answered this

question, she could not but say, after a moment's deliberation, —

'I am not.'

Lady Catherine seemed pleased.

'And will you promise me never to enter into such an engagement?'

'I will make no promise of the kind.'

'Miss Bennet, I am shocked and astonished. I expected to find a more reasonable young woman. But do not deceive yourself into a belief that I will ever recede. I shall not go away till you have given me the assurance I require.'

'And I certainly *never* shall give it. I am not to be intimidated into anything so wholly unreasonable. Your Ladyship wants Mr. Darcy to marry your daughter; but would my giving you the wished-for promise make *their* marriage at all more probable? Supposing him to be attached to me, would *my* refusing to accept his hand make him wish to bestow it on his cousin? Allow me to say, Lady Catherine, that the arguments with which you have supported this extraordinary application have been as frivolous as the application was ill-judged. You have widely mistaken my character, if you think I can be worked on by such persuasions as these. How far your nephew might approve of your interference in *his* affairs, I cannot tell; but you have certainly no right to concern yourself in mine. I must beg therefore to be importuned no further on the subject.'

'Not so hasty, if you please. I have by no means done. To all the objections I have already urged, I have still another to add. I am no stranger to the particulars of your youngest sister's infamous elopement. I know it all; that the young man's marrying her was a patched-up business, at the expense of your father and uncle. And is *such* a girl to be my nephew's sister? Is *her* husband, who is the son of his late father's steward, to be his brother? Heaven and earth! of what are you thinking? Are the shades of Pemberley to be thus polluted?'

'You can *now* have nothing further to say,' she resentfully answered. 'You have insulted me in every possible method. I must beg to return to the house.'

And she rose as she spoke. Lady Catherine rose also, and they turned back. Her Ladyship was highly incensed.

'You have no regard, then, for the honor and credit of my nephew! Unfeeling, selfish girl! Do you not consider that a connection with you must disgrace him in the eyes of everybody?'

'Lady Catherine, I have nothing further to say. You know my sentiments.'

'You are then resolved to have him?'

'I have said no such thing. I am only resolved to act in that manner which will, in my own opinion, constitute my happiness, without reference to *you*, or to any person so wholly unconnected with me.'[1]

'It is well. You refuse, then, to oblige me. You refuse to obey the claims of duty, honor, and gratitude. You are determined to ruin him in the opinion of all his friends, and make him the contempt of the world.'

'Neither duty, nor honor, nor gratitude,' replied Elizabeth, 'has any possible claim on me in the present instance. No principle of either would be violated by my marriage with Mr. Darcy. And with regard to the resentment of his family, or the indignation of the world, if the former *were* excited by his marrying me, it would not give me one moment's concern; and the world in general would have too much sense to join in the scorn.'

'And this is your real opinion! This is your final resolve! Very well! I shall now know how to act. Do not imagine, Miss Bennet, that your ambition will ever be gratified. I came to try you. I hoped to find

[1] Elizabeth's spirited resistance to the insolence of Lady Catherine finds its counterpart in modern fiction in that one of Mr. Anthony Trollope's novels in which Rev. Mr. Crawley suddenly turns upon the overbearing Mrs. Proudie and utterly discomfits her, to the secret delight of the Bishop, her husband.

you reasonable; but depend upon it I will carry my point.'

In this manner Lady Catherine talked on, till they were at the door of the carriage, when, turning hastily round, she added, —

'I take no leave of you, Miss Bennet. I send no compliments to your mother. You deserve no such attention. I am most seriously displeased.'

Elizabeth made no answer; and without attempting to persuade her Ladyship to return into the house, walked quietly into it herself. She heard the carriage drive away as she proceeded upstairs. Her mother impatiently met her at the door of the dressing-room, to ask why Lady Catherine would not come in again and rest herself.

'She did not choose it,' said her daughter; 'she would go.'

'She is a very fine-looking woman, and her calling here was prodigiously civil! for she only came, I suppose, to tell us the Collinses were well. She is on her road somewhere, I dare say, and so, passing through Meryton, thought she might as well call on you. I suppose she had nothing particular to say to you, Lizzy?'

Elizabeth was forced to conceal the truth here; for to acknowledge the substance of their conversation was impossible.[1]

[1] 'The interview between Lady Catherine and Elizabeth, like the scene in which Mr. Collins proposes to the heroine, is a triumph of art. It is the perfection of true comedy, as opposed to the coarse farce which frequently stands for it, not only in its wonderful exhibition of Lady Catherine's densely stupid egotism and self-importance, but in what is so successfully opposed to them in Elizabeth Bennet's strong common sense, racy mother wit, and sterling truth to her lover and to herself.' — HENRIETTA KEDDIE ('Sarah Tytler').

[The next four chapters recount the renewal of Darcy's proposals to Elizabeth, and their acceptance by her; the surprise of the Bennet family, who have known nothing of his previous attentions to her, and the reluctance of Mr. Bennet to believe that Elizabeth can have overcome her dislike to Darcy. Darcy's generosity to Wickham in paying all the latter's debts on the occasion of his marriage with Lydia is also described.]

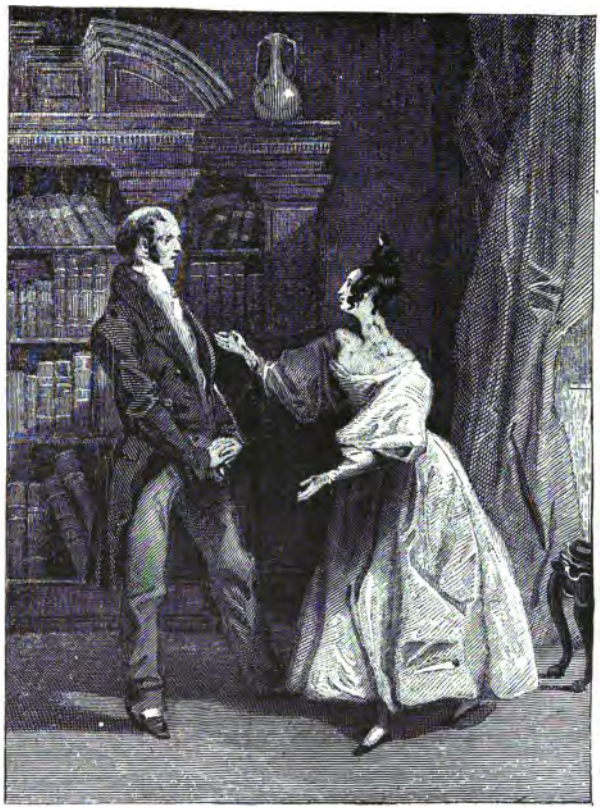
CHAPTER XXVIII.

HAPPY for all her maternal feelings was the day on which Mrs. Bennet got rid of her two most deserving daughters. With what delighted pride she afterwards visited Mrs. Bingley, and talked of Mrs. Darcy, may be guessed. I wish I could say, for the sake of her family, that the accomplishment of her earnest desire, in the establishment of so many of her children, produced so happy an effect as to make her a sensible, amiable, well-informed woman for the rest of her life; though perhaps it was lucky for her husband, who might not have relished domestic felicity in so unusual a form, that she still was occasionally nervous and invariably silly.

Mr. Bennet missed his second daughter exceedingly; his affection for her drew him oftener from home than anything else could do. He delighted in going to Pemberley, especially when he was least expected.

Mr. Bingley and Jane remained at Netherfield only a twelvemonth. So near a vicinity to her mother and Meryton relations was not desirable even to *his* easy temper or *her* affectionate heart. The darling wish of his sisters was then gratified: he bought an estate in a neighboring county to Derbyshire; and Jane and Elizabeth, in addition to every other source of happiness, were within thirty miles of each other.

Kitty, to her very material advantage, spent the chief of her time with her two elder sisters. In society so superior to what she had generally known, her improvement was great. She was not of so ungovernable



ELIZABETH TELLING HER FATHER OF HER ENGAGEMENT TO DARCY.
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a temper as Lydia, and, removed from the influence of Lydia's example, she became, by proper attention and management, less irritable, less ignorant, and less insipid. From the further disadvantage of Lydia's society she was of course carefully kept, and though Mrs. Wickham frequently invited her to come and stay with her, with the promise of balls and young men, her father would never consent to her going.

Mary was the only daughter who remained at home; and she was necessarily drawn from the pursuit of accomplishments by Mrs. Bennet's being quite unable to sit alone. Mary was obliged to mix more with the world, but she could still moralize over every morning visit; and as she was no longer mortified by comparisons between her sisters' beauty and her own, it was suspected by her father that she submitted to the change without much reluctance.

As for Wickham and Lydia, their characters suffered no revolution from the marriage of her sisters. He bore with philosophy the conviction that Elizabeth must now become acquainted with whatever of his ingratitude and falsehood had before been unknown to her; and, in spite of everything, was not wholly without hope that Darcy might yet be prevailed on to make his fortune. The congratulatory letter which Elizabeth received from Lydia, on her marriage, explained to her that, by his wife at least, if not by himself, such a hope was cherished. The letter was to this effect: —

My dear Lizzy, — I wish you joy. If you love Mr. Darcy half so well as I do my dear Wickham, you must be very happy. It is a great comfort to have you so rich, and when you have nothing else to do, I hope you will think of us. I am sure Wickham would like a place at court very much, and I do not think we shall have quite money enough to live upon without some help. Any place would do, of about three or four hundred a year; but, however, do not speak to Mr. Darcy about it, if you had rather not.

Yours, &c.

As it happened that Elizabeth had *much* rather not, she endeavored, in her answer, to put an end to every entreaty and expectation of the kind. Such relief, however, as it was in her power to afford, by the practice of what might be called economy in her own private expenses, she frequently sent them. It had always been evident to her that such an income as theirs, under the direction of two persons so extravagant in their wants, and heedless of the future, must be very insufficient to their support; and whenever they changed their quarters, either Jane or herself was sure of being applied to for some little assistance towards discharging their bills. Their manner of living, even when the restoration of peace[1] dismissed them to a home, was unsettled in the extreme. They were always moving from place to place in quest of a cheap situation, and always spending more than they ought. His affection for her soon sunk into indifference; hers lasted a little longer; and in spite of her youth and manners, she retained all the claims to reputation which her marriage had given her.

Though Darcy could never receive *him* at Pemberley, yet for Elizabeth's sake he assisted him further in his profession. Lydia was occasionally a visitor there, when her husband was gone to enjoy himself in London or Bath; and with the Bingleys they both of them frequently stayed so long, that even Bingley's good-humor was overcome, and he proceeded so far as to *talk* of giving them a hint to be gone.

Miss Bingley was very deeply mortified by Darcy's marriage; but as she thought it advisable to retain the

[1] Miss Austen's references to contemporary history are singularly few, and almost always as brief as in the present instance. Living as she did at a time when affairs of great national importance were of frequent occurrence, it is hardly likely that she could have remained indifferent to them; but she evidently did not look upon them as coming within the province of a writer of fiction.

right of visiting Pemberley, she dropped all her resentment; was fonder than ever of Georgiana, almost as attentive to Darcy as heretofore, and paid off every arrear of civility to Elizabeth.

Pemberley was now Georgiana's home; and the attachment of the sisters was exactly what Darcy had hoped to see. They were able to love each other even as well as they intended. Georgiana had the highest opinion in the world of Elizabeth; though at first she often listened with an astonishment bordering on alarm, at her lively, sportive manner of talking to her brother. He, who had always inspired in herself a respect which almost overcame her affection, she now saw the object of open pleasantry. Her mind received knowledge which had never before fallen in her way. By Elizabeth's instructions she began to comprehend that a woman may take liberties with her husband, which a brother will not always allow in a sister more than ten years younger than himself.

Lady Catherine was extremely indignant on the marriage of her nephew; and as she gave way to all the genuine frankness of her character, in her reply to the letter which announced its arrangement, she sent him language so very abusive, especially of Elizabeth, that for some time all intercourse was at an end. But at length, by Elizabeth's persuasion, he was prevailed on to overlook the offence and seek a reconciliation; and after a little further resistance on the part of his aunt, her resentment gave way, either to her affection for him, or her curiosity to see how his wife conducted herself; and she condescended to wait on them at Pemberley, in spite of that pollution which its woods had received, not merely from the presence of such a mistress, but the visits of her uncle and aunt from the city.

With the Gardiners they were always on the most intimate terms. Darcy, as well as Elizabeth, really loved them; and they were both ever sensible of the

warmest gratitude towards the persons who, by bringing her into Derbyshire, had been the means of uniting them.[1]

[1] Miss Austen sometimes favored her friends with items concerning the subsequent history of her characters, and thus we learn that Kitty Bennet after a time married a clergyman near Pemberley, and that the studious Mary married one of the clerks of her uncle Philips, and became a shining light in the village society of Meryton.

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

John Dashwood: Step-son to Mrs. Henry Dashwood. A rather cold-hearted, selfish young man, much under the sway of his even more selfish wife.

Colonel Brandon: An estimable gentleman of fortune, between thirty-five and forty years of age, and much in love with Marianne Dashwood, whom he finally marries.

Edward Ferrars: Eldest son of Mrs. Ferrars. Falls in love with Elinor Dashwood while engaged to Lucy Steele. Is finally jilted by her in favor of his brother, and marries Elinor.

Robert Ferrars: Younger son of Mrs. Ferrars. A selfish, unprincipled young man, and his mother's favorite.

Sir John Middleton: A country squire living at Barton Park. A bluff, good-natured, sociable man, with a kind heart but somewhat boisterous manners.

Mr. Palmer: The wealthy proprietor of Cleveland in Somersetshire. A young man of no extraordinary abilities, who affects a rudeness of manner as a sign of superior personal merit.

Willoughby: The supposed lover of Marianne Dashwood. A young man of pleasing exterior and loose morals, who wins the love of Marianne, and after giving every evidence of great affection for her deserts her, and marries a wealthy heiress.

Thomas: Man-servant to Mrs. Henry Dashwood.

Mrs. Henry Dashwood: A widow of forty, living with her daughters at Barton Cottage, near Barton Park. A warm-hearted, refined woman of a trusting, romantic disposition.

Elinor Dashwood: Eldest daughter to Mrs. Henry Dashwood. A well-bred, sensible girl, much in love with Edward Ferrars, but with too much self-poise to let her feelings run away with her.

Marianne Dashwood: Second daughter to Mrs. Henry Dashwood. An impulsive, romantic girl, who falls violently in love with Willoughby, and on all occasions is given to manifestations of more feeling than good sense.

Margaret Dashwood: Youngest daughter to Mrs. Henry Dashwood. A young girl who appears but seldom in the story.

Mrs. John Dashwood: Frequently referred to as 'Fanny,' daughter to Mrs. Ferrars. A selfish woman, jealous of her husband's relatives, and fond of none but her own family.

Mrs. Ferrars: a wealthy widow of a narrow, sour disposition. 'A lucky contraction of the brow had rescued her countenance from the disgrace of insipidity by giving it the strong characters of pride and ill-nature.'

Mrs. Jennings: Mother of Lady Middleton and Mrs. Palmer. An old woman with not much refinement, but of great goodness of heart, who is always ready to devote her money or time to her friends.

Lady Middleton: Eldest daugher to Mrs. Jennings, and wife of Sir John Middleton. An insipid, coldly selfish woman, but of much greater refinement than her mother.

Mrs. Palmer: Second daughter to Mrs. Jennings and wife to Mr. Palmer. A silly woman, who chatters and laughs incessantly.

Lucy Steele: An underbred, designing young woman, who jilts Edward Ferrars and marries his brother Robert.

Nancy Steele: Sister to Lucy. An empty-headed young woman whose mind is taken up with the desire of receiving the attentions of men.

The scene of the story is first at Norland Park in Sussex, but in the fourth chapter shifts to Barton near Exeter. London is the locality of the central portion of the story, and Cleveland in Somerset of a few subsequent chapters, the conclusion of the whole being laid at Barton. The time of the narration is a little over two years.

steady, respectable young man, was amply provided for by the fortune of his mother, which had been large, and half of which devolved on him on his coming of age. By his own marriage, likewise, which happened soon afterwards, he added to his wealth. To him, therefore, the succession to the Norland estate was not so really important as to his sisters; for their fortune, independent of what might arise to them from their father's inheriting that property, could be but small. Their mother had nothing, and their father only seven thousand pounds in his own disposal; for the remaining moiety of his first wife's fortune was also secured to her child, and he had only a life-interest in it.

The old gentleman died: his will was read; and, like almost every other will, gave as much disappointment as pleasure. He was neither so unjust nor so ungrateful as to leave his estate from his nephew; but he left it to him on such terms as destroyed half the value of the bequest. Mr. Dashwood had wished for it more for the sake of his wife and daughters than for himself or his son: but to his son, and his son's son, a child of four years old, it was secured in such a way as to leave to himself no power of providing for those who were most dear to him, and who most needed a provision, by any charge on the estate, or by any sale of its valuable woods. The whole was tied up for the benefit of this child, who, in occasional visits with his father and mother at Norland, had so far gained on the affections of his uncle, by such attractions as are by no means unusual in children of two or three years old, — an imperfect articulation, an earnest desire of having his own way, many cunning tricks, and a great deal of noise, — as to outweigh all the value of all the attention which for years he had received from his niece and her daughters. He meant not to be unkind, however, and as a mark of his affection for the three girls he left them a thousand pounds apiece.

Mr. Dashwood's disappointment was at first severe;

but his temper was cheerful and sanguine; and he might reasonably hope to live many years, and, by living economically, lay by a considerable sum from the produce of an estate already large, and capable of almost immediate improvement. But the fortune, which had been so tardy in coming, was his only one twelvemonth. He survived his uncle no longer; and ten thousand pounds, including the late legacies, was all that remained for his widow and daughters.

His son was sent for as soon as his danger was known, and to him Mr. Dashwood recommended, with all the strength and urgency which illness could command, the interest of his mother-in-law and sisters.

Mr. John Dashwood had not the strong feelings of the rest of the family; but he was affected by a recommendation of such a nature at such a time, and he promised to do everything in his power to make them comfortable. His father was rendered easy by such an assurance, and Mr. John Dashwood had then leisure to consider how much there might prudently be in his power to do for them.

He was not an ill-disposed young man, unless to be rather cold-hearted and rather selfish is to be ill-disposed; but he was in general well-respected, for he conducted himself with propriety in the discharge of his ordinary duties. Had he married a more amiable woman, he might have been made still more respectable than he was; he might even have been made amiable himself; for he was very young when he married, and very fond of his wife. But Mrs. John Dashwood was a strong caricature of himself; more narrow-minded and selfish.

When he gave his promise to his father, he meditated within himself to increase the fortunes of his sisters by the present of a thousand pounds apiece. He then really thought himself equal to it. The prospect of four thousand a year, in addition to his present income, besides the remaining half of his own mother's fortune,

warmed his heart, and made him feel capable of generosity. 'Yes, he would give them three thousand pounds; it would be liberal and handsome! It would be enough to make them completely easy. Three thousand pounds! he could spare so considerable a sum with little inconvenience.' He thought of it all day long, and for many days successively, and he did not repent.

No sooner was his father's funeral over, than Mrs. John Dashwood, without sending any notice of her intention to her mother-in-law, arrived with her child and their attendants. No one could dispute her right to come; the house was her husband's from the moment of his father's decease; but the indelicacy of her conduct was so much the greater, and to a woman in Mrs. Dashwood's situation, with only common feelings, must have been highly unpleasing; but in *her* mind there was a sense of honor so keen, a generosity so romantic, that any offence of the kind, by whomsoever given or received, was to her a source of immovable disgust. Mrs. John Dashwood had never been a favorite with any of her husband's family; but she had had no opportunity, till the present, of showing them with how little attention to the comfort of other people she could act when occasion required it.

So acutely did Mrs. Dashwood feel this ungracious behavior, and so earnestly did she despise her daughter-in-law for it, that on the arrival of the latter she would have quitted the house forever, had not the entreaty of her eldest girl induced her first to reflect on the propriety of going, and her own tender love for all her three children determined her afterwards to stay, and for their sakes avoid a breach with their brother.

Elinor, this eldest daughter, whose advice was so effectual, possessed a strength of understanding and coolness of judgment which qualified her, though only nineteen, to be the counsellor of her mother, and enabled her frequently to counteract, to the advantage of them all, that eagerness of mind in Mrs. Dashwood

which must generally have led to imprudence. She had an excellent heart; her disposition was affectionate, and her feelings were strong, but she knew how to govern them; it was a knowledge which her mother had yet to learn, and which one of her sisters had resolved never to be taught.

Marianne's abilities were, in many respects, quite equal to Elinor's. She was sensible and clever, but eager in everything; her sorrows, her joys, could have no moderation. She was generous, amiable, interesting; she was everything but prudent. The resemblance between her and her mother was strikingly great.

Elinor saw, with concern, the excess of her sister's sensibility; but by Mrs. Dashwood it was valued and cherished. They encouraged each other now in the violence of their affliction. The agony of grief which overpowered them at first was voluntarily renewed, was sought for, was created again and again. They gave themselves up wholly to their sorrow, seeking increase of wretchedness in every reflection that could afford it, and resolved against ever admitting consolation in future. Elinor, too, was deeply afflicted; but still she could struggle, she could exert herself. She could consult with her brother, could receive her sister-in-law on her arrival, and treat her with proper attention; and could strive to rouse her mother to similar exertion, and encourage her to similar forbearance.

Margaret, the other sister, was a good-humored, well-disposed girl; but as she had already imbibed a good deal of Marianne's romance, without having much of her sense, she did not, at thirteen, bid fair to equal her sisters at a more advanced period of life.

[The next five chapters narrate the dispersion of John Dashwood's good intentions towards his mother and sisters; the attachment between Elinor Dashwood and Edward Ferrars; and the removal of Mrs. Henry Dashwood and her daughters to a small estate owned by their relative, Sir John Middleton, and situated near his home, in the vicinity of Exeter.]

CHAPTER VII.

BARTON PARK was about half a mile from the cottage. The ladies had passed near it in their way along the valley, but it was screened from their view at home by the projection of a hill. The house was large and handsome, and the Middletons lived in a style of equal hospitality and elegance. The former was for Sir John's gratification, the latter for that of his lady. They were scarcely ever without some friends staying with them in the house, and they kept more company of every kind than any other family in the neighborhood. It was necessary to the happiness of both; for however dissimilar in temper and outward behavior, they strongly resembled each other in that total want of talent and taste which confined their employments, unconnected with such as society produced, within a very narrow compass. Sir John was a sportsman, Lady Middleton a mother. He hunted and shot, and she humored her children; and these were their only resources. Lady Middleton had the advantage of being able to spoil her children all the year round, while Sir John's independent employments were in existence only half the time. Continual engagements at home and abroad, however, supplied all the deficiencies of nature and education; supported the good spirits of Sir John, and gave exercise to the good-breeding of his wife.

Lady Middleton piqued herself upon the elegance of her table, and of all her domestic arrangements; and from this kind of vanity was her greatest enjoyment in any of their parties. But Sir John's satisfaction in society was much more real; he delighted in collecting about him more young people than his house would hold, and the noisier they were the better was he pleased. He was a blessing to all the juvenile part of the neighborhood; for in summer he was forever form-

ing parties to eat cold ham and chicken out of doors, and in winter his private balls were numerous enough for any young lady who was not suffering under the unsatiable appetite of fifteen.

The arrival of a new family in the country was always a matter of joy to him; and in every point of view he was charmed with the inhabitants he had now procured for his cottage at Barton. The Misses Dashwood were young, pretty, and unaffected. It was enough to secure his good opinion; for to be unaffected was all that a pretty girl could want to make her mind as captivating as her person. The friendliness of his disposition made him happy in accommodating those whose situation might be considered, in comparison with the past, as unfortunate. In showing kindness to his cousins, therefore, he had the real satisfaction of a good heart; and in settling a family of females[1] only in his cottage, he had all the satisfaction of a sportsman; for a sportsman, though he esteems only those of his sex who are sportsmen likewise, is not often desirous of encouraging their taste by admitting them to a residence within his own manor.

Mrs. Dashwood and her daughters were met at the door of the house by Sir John, who welcomed them to Barton Park with unaffected sincerity; and, as he attended them to the drawing-room, repeated to the young ladies the concern which the same subject had drawn from him the day before, at being unable to get any smart young men to meet them. They would see, he said, only one gentleman there besides himself; a particular friend who was staying at the Park, but who was neither very young nor very gay. He hoped they would all excuse the smallness of the party, and could assure them it should never happen so again. He had

[1] *Females.* At the opening of this century the word 'female' as a synonym for 'woman' was sanctioned by the best usage of the time. Its present complete disuse in this connection in literature and in conversation marks a decided gain in good taste and refinement.

been to several families that morning, in hopes of procuring some addition to their number, but it was moonlight, and everybody was full of engagements. Luckily Lady Middleton's mother had arrived at Barton within the last hour; and as she was a very cheerful, agreeable woman, he hoped the young ladies would not find it so very dull as they might imagine. The young ladies, as well as their mother, were perfectly satisfied with having two entire strangers of the party, and wished for no more.

Mrs. Jennings, Lady Middleton's mother, was a good-humored, merry, fat, elderly woman, who talked a great deal, seemed very happy, and rather vulgar. She was full of jokes and laughter, and before dinner was over had said many witty things on the subject of lovers and husbands, hoped they had not left their hearts behind them in Sussex, and pretended to see them blush whether they did or not. Marianne was vexed at it for her sister's sake, and turned her eyes towards Elinor to see how she bore these attacks, with an earnestness which gave Elinor far more pain than could arise from such commonplace raillery as Mrs. Jennings's.

Colonel Brandon, the friend of Sir John, seemed no more adapted by resemblance of manner to be his friend, than Lady Middleton was to be his wife, or Mrs. Jennings to be Lady Middleton's mother. He was silent and grave. His appearance, however, was not unpleasing, in spite of his being, in the opinion of Marianne and Margaret, an absolute old bachelor, for he was on the wrong side of five-and-thirty; but though his face was not handsome, his countenance was sensible, and his address was particularly gentlemanlike.

There was nothing in any of the party which could recommend them as companions to the Dashwoods; but the cold insipidity of Lady Middleton was so particularly repulsive, that in comparison of it the gravity of Colonel Brandon, and even the boisterous mirth of

Sir John and his mother-in-law, was interesting. Lady Middleton seemed to be roused to enjoyment only by the entrance of her four noisy children after dinner, who pulled her about, tore her clothes, and put an end to every kind of discourse except what related to themselves.

In the evening, as Marianne was discovered to be musical, she was invited to play. The instrument was unlocked, everybody prepared to be charmed, and Marianne, who sang very well, at their request went through the chief of the songs which Lady Middleton had brought into the family on her marriage, and which perhaps had lain ever since in the same position on the piano-forte; for her ladyship had celebrated that event by giving up music, although, by her mother's account, she had played extremely well, and by her own was very fond of it.

Marianne's performance was highly applauded. Sir John was loud in his admiration at the end of every song, and as loud in his conversation with the others while every song lasted. Lady Middleton frequently called him to order, wondered how any one's attention could be diverted from music for a moment, and asked Marianne to sing a particular song which Marianne had just finished. Colonel Brandon alone, of all the party, heard her without being in raptures. He paid her only the compliment of attention; and she felt a respect for him on the occasion, which the others had reasonably forfeited by their shameless want of taste. His pleasure in music, though it amounted not to that ecstatic delight which alone could sympathize with her own, was estimable when contrasted against the horrible insensibility of the others; and she was reasonable enough to allow that a man of five-and-thirty might well have outlived all acuteness of feeling, and every exquisite power of enjoyment. She was perfectly disposed to make every allowance for the colonel's advanced state of life which humanity required.

CHAPTER VIII.

MRS. JENNINGS was a widow with an ample jointure. She had only two daughters, both of whom she had lived to see respectably married, and she had now, therefore, nothing to do but to marry all the rest of the world. In the promotion of this object she was zealously active, as far as her ability reached; and missed no opportunity of projecting weddings among all the young people of her acquaintance. She was remarkably quick in the discovery of attachments, and had enjoyed the advantage of raising the blushes and the vanity of many a young lady by insinuations of her power over such a young man; and this kind of discernment enabled her, soon after her arrival at Barton, decisively to pronounce that Colonel Brandon was very much in love with Marianne Dashwood. She rather suspected it to be so, on the very first evening of their being together, from his listening so attentively while she sang to them; and when the visit was returned by the Middletons dining at the cottage, the fact was ascertained by his listening to her again. It must be so. She was perfectly convinced of it. It would be an excellent match, for *he* was rich, and *she* was handsome. Mrs. Jennings had been anxious to see Colonel Brandon well married, ever since her connection with Sir John first brought him to her knowledge; and she was always anxious to get a good husband for every pretty girl.

The immediate advantage to herself was by no means inconsiderable, for it supplied her with endless jokes against them both. At the Park she laughed at the colonel, and in the cottage at Marianne. To the former her raillery was probably, as far as it regarded only himself, perfectly indifferent; but to the latter it was at first incomprehensible; and when its object was under-

stood, she hardly knew whether most to laugh at its absurdity, or censure its impertinence; for she considered it as an unfeeling reflection on the colonel's advanced years, and on his forlorn condition as an old bachelor.

Mrs. Dashwood, who could not think a man five years younger than herself so exceedingly ancient as he appeared to the youthful fancy of her daughter, ventured to clear Mrs. Jennings from the probability of wishing to throw ridicule on his age.

'But at least, mamma, you cannot deny the absurdity of the accusation, though you may not think it intentionally ill-natured. Colonel Brandon is certainly younger than Mrs. Jennings, but he is old enough to be *my* father; and if he were ever animated enough to be in love, must have long outlived every sensation of the kind. It is too ridiculous! When is a man to be safe from such wit, if age and infirmity will not protect him?'

'Infirmity!' said Elinor; 'do you call Colonel Brandon infirm? I can easily suppose that his age may appear much greater to you than to my mother; but you can hardly deceive yourself as to his having the use of his limbs!'

'Did not you hear him complain of the rheumatism; and is not that the commonest infirmity of declining life?'

'My dearest child,' said her mother, laughing, 'at this rate you must be in continual terror of *my* decay; and it must seem to you a miracle that my life has been extended to the advanced age of forty.'

'Mamma, you are not doing me justice. I know very well that Colonel Brandon is not old enough to make his friends yet apprehensive of losing him in the course of nature. He may live twenty years longer. But thirty-five has nothing to do with matrimony.'

'Perhaps,' said Elinor, 'thirty-five and seventeen had better not have anything to do with matrimony

together. But if there should, by any chance, happen to be a woman who is single at seven-and-twenty, I should not think Colonel Brandon's being thirty-five any objection to his marrying *her*.'

'A woman of seven-and-twenty,' said Marianne, after pausing a moment, 'can never hope to feel or inspire affection again; and if her home be uncomfortable, or her fortune small, I can suppose that she might bring herself to submit to the offices of a nurse, for the sake of the provision and security of a wife. In his marrying such a woman, therefore, there would be nothing unsuitable. It would be a compact of convenience, and the world would be satisfied. In my eyes it would be no marriage at all; but that would be nothing. To me it would seem only a commercial exchange, in which each wished to be benefited at the expense of the other.'

'It would be impossible, I know,' replied Elinor, 'to convince you that a woman of seven-and-twenty could feel for a man of thirty-five anything near enough to love to make him a desirable companion to her. But I must object to your dooming Colonel Brandon and his wife to the constant confinement of a sick-chamber, merely because he chanced to complain yesterday (a very cold, damp day) of a slight rheumatic feeling in one of his shoulders.'

'But he talked of flannel waistcoats,' said Marianne; 'and with me a flannel waistcoat is invariably connected with aches, cramps, rheumatisms, and every species of ailment that can afflict the old and the feeble.'

'Had he been only in a violent fever, you would not have despised him half so much. Confess, Marianne, is not there something interesting to you in the flushed cheek, hollow eye, and quick pulse of a fever?'

Soon after this, upon Elinor's leaving the room, 'Mamma,' said Marianne, 'I have an alarm on the subject of illness which I cannot conceal from you. I am sure Edward Ferrars is not well. We have now been here almost a fortnight, and yet he does not

come. Nothing but real indisposition could occasion this extraordinary delay. What else can detain him at Norland?'

'Had you any idea of his coming so soon?' said Mrs. Dashwood. '*I* had none. On the contrary, if I have felt any anxiety at all on the subject, it has been in recollecting that he sometimes showed a want of pleasure and readiness in accepting my invitation when I talked of his coming to Barton. Does Elinor expect him already?'

'I have never mentioned it to her, but of course she must.'

'I rather think you are mistaken, for when I was talking to her yesterday of getting a new grate for the spare bed-chamber, she observed that there was no immediate hurry for it, as it was not likely that the room would be wanted for some time.'

'How strange this is! What can be the meaning of it! But the whole of their behavior to each other has been unaccountable! How cold, how composed were their last adieus; how languid their conversation the last evening of their being together! In Edward's farewell there was no distinction between Elinor and me; it was the good wishes of an affectionate brother to both. Twice did I leave them purposely together in the course of the last morning, and each time did he most unaccountably follow me out of the room. And Elinor, in quitting Norland and Edward, cried not as I did. Even now her self-command is invariable. When is she dejected or melancholy? When does she try to avoid society, or appear restless and dissatisfied in it?'

[In the next six chapters the meeting of Willoughby with the Dashwoods is described, and the sudden attachment between Marianne and Willoughby. Elinor perceives Colonel Brandon's regard for her sister, but Marianne has eyes for no one but Willoughby.]

CHAPTER XV.

Mrs. Dashwood's visit to Lady Middleton took place the next day, and two of her daughters went with her; but Marianne excused herself from being of the party, under some trifling pretext of employment; and her mother, who concluded that a promise had been made by Willoughby the night before of calling on her while they were absent, was perfectly satisfied with her remaining at home.

On their return from the Park they found Willoughby's curricle and servant in waiting at the cottage, and Mrs. Dashwood was convinced that her conjecture had been just. So far it was all as she had foreseen; but on entering the house she beheld what no foresight had taught her to expect. They were no sooner in the passage than Marianne came hastily out of the parlor, apparently in violent affliction, with her handkerchief at her eyes, and, without noticing them, ran upstairs. Surprised and alarmed, they proceeded directly into the room she had just quitted, where they found only Willoughby, who was leaning against the mantel-piece, with his back towards them. He turned round on their coming in, and his countenance showed that he strongly partook of the emotion which overpowered Marianne.

'Is anything the matter with her?' cried Mrs. Dashwood, as she entered; 'is she ill?'

'I hope not,' he replied, trying to look cheerful; and with a forced smile presently added, 'It is I who may rather expect to be ill; for I am now suffering under a very heavy disappointment!'

'Disappointment!'

'Yes, for I am unable to keep my engagement with you. Mrs. Smith has this morning exercised the privilege of riches upon a poor, dependent cousin, by send-

ing me on business to London. I have just received my despatches, and taken my farewell of Allenham; and by way of exhilaration I am now come to take my farewell of you.'

'To London! And are you going this morning?'

'Almost this moment.'

'This is very unfortunate. But Mrs. Smith must be obliged; and her business will not detain you from us long, I hope.'

He colored as he replied, 'You are very kind; but I have no idea of returning into Devonshire immediately. My visits to Mrs. Smith are never repeated within the twelvemonth.'

'And is Mrs. Smith your only friend? Is Allenham the only house in the neighborhood to which you will be welcome? For shame, Willoughby;[1] can you wait for an invitation here?'

His color increased; and, with his eyes fixed on the ground, he only replied, 'You are too good.'

Mrs. Dashwood looked at Elinor with surprise. Elinor felt equal amazement. For a few moments every one was silent. Mrs. Dashwood first spoke.

'I have only to add, my dear Willoughby, that at Barton cottage you will always be welcome; for I will not press you to return here immediately, because you only can judge how far *that* might be pleasing to Mrs. Smith; and on this head I shall be no more disposed to question your judgment than to doubt your inclination.'

'My engagements at present,' replied Willoughby, confusedly, 'are of such a nature — that — I dare not flatter myself — '

He stopped. Mrs. Dashwood was too much astonished to speak, and another pause succeeded. This was broken by Willoughby, who said, with a faint smile, 'It is folly to linger in this manner. I will not

[1] *Willoughby.* Surnames were commonly used in conversation, both in allusion and in direct address, to a far greater extent a century ago than they are at present.

torment myself any longer by remaining among friends whose society it is impossible for me now to enjoy.'

He then hastily took leave of them all, and left the room. They saw him step into his carriage, and in a minute it was out of sight.

Mrs. Dashwood felt too much for speech, and instantly quitted the parlor to give way in solitude to the concern and alarm which this sudden departure occasioned.

Elinor's uneasiness was at least equal to her mother's. She thought of what had just passed with anxiety and distrust. Willoughby's behavior in taking leave of them, his embarrassment and affectation of cheerfulness, and, above all, his unwillingness to accept her mother's invitation, — a backwardness so unlike a lover, so unlike himself, — greatly disturbed her. One moment she feared that no serious design had ever been formed on his side; and the next that some unfortunate quarrel had taken place between him and her sister. The distress in which Marianne had quitted the room was such as a serious quarrel could most reasonably account for; though when she considered what Marianne's love for him was, a quarrel seemed almost impossible.

But whatever might be the particulars of their separation, her sister's affliction was indubitable; and she thought with the tenderest compassion of that violent sorrow which Marianne was in all probability not merely giving way to as a relief, but feeding and encouraging as a duty.

In about half an hour her mother returned, and though her eyes were red, her countenance was not uncheerful.

'Our dear Willoughby is now some miles from Barton, Elinor,' said she, as she sat down to work, 'and with how heavy a heart does he travel!'

'It is all very strange. So suddenly to be gone! It seems but the work of a moment. And last night he was with us so happy, so cheerful, so affectionate! And now, after only ten minutes' notice, — gone, too, with-

out intending to return! Something more than what he owned to us must have happened. He did not speak, he did not behave like himself. *You* must have seen the difference as well as I. What can it be? Can they have quarrelled? Why else should he have shown such unwillingness to accept your invitation here?'

'It was not inclination that he wanted, Elinor; I could plainly see *that*. He had not the power of accepting it. I have thought it all over, I assure you, and I can perfectly account for everything that at first seemed strange to me as well as to you.'

'Can you, indeed?'

'Yes. I have explained it to myself in the most satisfactory way; but you, Elinor, who love to doubt where you can,—it will not satisfy *you*, I know; but you shall not talk *me* out of my trust in it. I am persuaded that Mrs. Smith suspects his regard for Marianne, disapproves of it (perhaps because she has other views for him), and on that account is eager to get him away; and that the business which she sends him off to transact is invented as an excuse to dismiss him. This is what I believe to have happened. He is, moreover, aware that she *does* disapprove the connection; he dares not therefore at present confess to her his engagement with Marianne, and he feels himself obliged, from his dependent situation, to give in to her schemes, and absent himself from Devonshire for a while. You will tell me, I know, that this may or may *not* have happened; but I will listen to no cavil, unless you can point out any other method of understanding the affair as satisfactory as this. And now, Elinor, what have you to say?'

'Nothing: for you have anticipated my answer.'

'Then you would have told me that it might or might not have happened. Oh, Elinor, how incomprehensible are your feelings! You had rather take evil upon credit than good. You had rather look out for misery for Marianne, and guilt for poor Willoughby, than an

apology for the latter. You are resolved to think him blamable, because he took leave of us with less affection than his usual behavior has shown. And is no allowance to be made for inadvertence, or for spirits depressed by recent disappointment? Are no probabilities to be accepted, merely because they are not certainties? Is nothing due to the man whom we have all such reason to love, and no reason in the world to think ill of; to the possibility of motives unanswerable in themselves, though unavoidably secret for a while? And, after all, what is it you suspect him of?'

'I can hardly tell you myself. But suspicion of something unpleasant is the inevitable consequence of such an alteration as we just witnessed in him. There is great truth, however, in what you have now urged of the allowances which ought to be made for him, and it is my wish to be candid in my judgment of everybody. Willoughby may, undoubtedly, have very sufficient reasons for his conduct, and I will hope that he has. But it would have been more like Willoughby to acknowledge them at once. Secrecy may be advisable; but still I cannot help wondering at its being practised by him.'

'Do not blame him, however, for departing from his character where the deviation is necessary. But you really do admit the justice of what I have said in his defence? I am happy; and he is acquitted.'

'Not entirely. It may be proper to conceal their engagement (if they *are* engaged) from Mrs. Smith; and if that is the case, it must be highly expedient for Willoughby to be but little in Devonshire at present. But this is no excuse for their concealing it from us.'

'Concealing it from us! My dear child, do you accuse Willoughby and Marianne of concealment? This is strange, indeed, when your eyes have been reproaching them every day for incautiousness.'

'I want no proof of their affection,' said Elinor, 'but of their engagement I do.'

'I am perfectly satisfied of both.'

'Yet not a syllable has been said to you on the subject by either of them.'

'I have not wanted syllables where actions have spoken so plainly. Has not his behavior to Marianne and to all of us, for at least the last fortnight, declared that he loved and considered her as his future wife, and that he felt for us the attachment of the nearest relation? Have we not perfectly understood each other? Has not my consent been daily asked by his looks, his manner, his attentive and affectionate respect? My Elinor, is it possible to doubt their engagement? How could such a thought occur to you? How is it to be supposed that Willoughby, persuaded as he must be of your sister's love, should leave her, and leave her perhaps for months, without telling her of his affection, — that they should part without a mutual exchange of confidence?'

'I confess,' replied Elinor, 'that every circumstance except *one* is in favor of their engagement; but that *one* is the total silence of both on the subject, and with me it almost outweighs every other.'

'How strange this is! You must think wretchedly indeed of Willoughby, if, after all that has openly passed between them, you can doubt the nature of the terms on which they are together. Has he been acting a part in his behavior to your sister all this time? Do you suppose him really indifferent to her?'

'No, I cannot think that. He must and does love her, I am sure.'

'But with a strange kind of tenderness, if he can leave her with such indifference, such carelessness of the future, as you attribute to him.'

'You must remember, my dear mother, that I have never considered this matter as certain. I have had my doubts, I confess; but they are fainter than they were, and they may soon be entirely done away. If we find they correspond, every fear of mine will be removed.'

'A mighty concession, indeed! If you were to see

them at the altar, you would suppose they were going to be married. Ungracious girl! But *I* require no such proof. Nothing in my opinion has ever passed to justify doubt; no secrecy has been attempted; all has been uniformly open and unreserved. You cannot doubt your sister's wishes. It must be Willoughby, therefore, whom you suspect. But why? Is he not a man of honor and feeling? Has there been any inconsistency on his side to create alarm? Can he be deceitful?'

'I hope not, I believe not,' cried Elinor. 'I love Willoughby, sincerely love him; and suspicion of his integrity cannot be more painful to yourself than to me. It has been involuntary, and I will not encourage it. I was startled, I confess, by the alteration in his manners this morning; he did not speak like himself, and did not return your kindness with any cordiality. But all this may be explained by such a situation of his affairs as you have supposed. He had just parted from my sister, had seen her leave him in the greatest affliction; and if he felt obliged, from a fear of offending Mrs. Smith, to resist the temptation of returning here soon, and yet aware that by declining your invitation, by saying that he was going away for some time, he should seem to act an ungenerous, a suspicious part by our family, he might well be embarrassed and disturbed. In such a case, a plain and open avowal of his difficulties would have been more to his honor, I think, as well as more consistent with his general character; but I will not raise objections against any one's conduct on so illiberal a foundation as a difference in judgment from myself, or a deviation from what I may think right and consistent.'

'You speak very properly. Willoughby certainly does not deserve to be suspected. Though *we* have not known him long, he is no stranger in this part of the world; and who has ever spoken to his disadvantage? Had he been in a situation to act independently and marry immediately, it might have been odd that he

should leave us without acknowledging everything to me at once: but this is not the case. It is an engagement in some respects not prosperously begun, for their marriage must be at a very uncertain distance; and even secrecy, as far as it can be observed, may now be very advisable.'

They were interrupted by the entrance of Margaret; and Elinor was then at liberty to think over the representations of her mother, to acknowledge the probability of many, and hope for the justice of all.

They saw nothing of Marianne till dinner-time, when she entered the room and took her place at the table without saying a word. Her eyes were red and swollen; and it seemed as if her tears were even then restrained with difficulty. She avoided the looks of them all, could neither eat nor speak, and after some time, on her mother's silently pressing her hand with tender compassion, her small degree of fortitude was quite overcome, she burst into tears, and left the room.

This violent oppression of spirits continued the whole evening. She was without any power, because she was without any desire of command over herself. The slightest mention of anything relative to Willoughby overpowered her in an instant; and though her family were most anxiously attentive to her comfort, it was impossible for them, if they spoke at all, to keep clear of every subject which her feelings connected with him.

[The remainder of this volume and the whole of the second are mainly devoted to the account of Marianne's grief over the defection of her lover; the introduction of the Palmers and Steeles into the narrative; Lucy Steele's confession to Elinor of her engagement to Edward Ferrars; the disclosure by Colonel Brandon of Willoughby's profligate character; and the visit of Elinor and Marianne to Mrs. Jennings in London, where they frequently meet with the Palmers, Steeles, Middletons, Colonel Brandon, and their brother and his wife.]

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY.

VOLUME THE THIRD.

CHAPTER I.

MRS. PALMER was so well at the end of a fortnight that her mother felt it no longer necessary to give up the whole of her time to her; and, contenting herself with visiting her once or twice a day, returned from that period to her own home and her own habits, in which she found the Misses Dashwood very ready to reassume their former share.

About the third or fourth morning after their being thus resettled in Berkeley Street, Mrs. Jennings, on returning from her ordinary visit to Mrs. Palmer, entered the drawing-room, where Elinor was sitting by herself, with an air of such hurrying importance as prepared her to hear something wonderful; and giving her time only to form that idea, began directly to justify it, by saying, —

'Lord! my dear Miss Dashwood! have you heard the news?'

'No, ma'am. What is it?'

'Something so strange! But you shall hear it all. When I got to Mr. Palmer's, I found Charlotte quite in a fuss about the child. She was sure it was very ill, — it cried, and fretted, and was all over pimples. So I looked at it directly, and, "Lord! my dear!" says I, "it is nothing in the world but the red gum;" and nurse said just the same. But Charlotte, she would

not be satisfied, so Mr. Donavan was sent for; and luckily he happened to just come in from Harley Street, so he stepped over directly, and as soon as ever he saw the child, he said just as we did, that it was nothing in the world but the red gum; and then Charlotte was easy. And so, just as he was going away again, it came into my head, I am sure I do not know how I happened to think of it, but it came into my head to ask him if there was any news. So upon that he smirked and simpered and looked grave, and seemed to know something or other, and at last he said in a whisper, "For fear any unpleasant report should reach the young ladies under your care as to their sister's indisposition, I think it advisable to say that I believe there is no great reason for alarm; I hope Mrs. Dashwood will do very well."'

'What! is Fanny ill?'

'That is exactly what I said, my dear. "Lord!" says I, "is Mrs. Dashwood ill?" So then it all came out; and the long and the short of the matter, by all I can learn, seems to be this. Mr. Edward Ferrars, the very young man I used to joke with you about (but, however, as it turns out, I am monstrous glad there was never anything in it), Mr. Edward Ferrars, it seems, has been engaged above this twelvemonth to my cousin Lucy! — there's for you, my dear! — and not a creature knowing a syllable of the matter, except Nancy! Could you have believed such a thing possible? There is no great wonder in their liking one another; but that matters should be brought so forward between them, and nobody suspect it! — *that* is strange! I never happened to see them together, or I am sure I should have found it out directly. Well, and so this was kept a great secret, for fear of Mrs. Ferrars, and neither she nor your brother or sister suspected a word of the matter, till this very morning poor Nancy, who, you know, is a well-meaning creature, but no conjurer, popped it all out. "Lord!" thinks she to herself, "they

are all so fond of Lucy, to be sure they will make no difficulty about it;" and so away she went to your sister, who was sitting all alone at her carpet-work, little suspecting what was to come, for she had just been saying to your brother, only five minutes before, that she thought to make a match between Edward and some Lord's daughter or other, I forget who. So you may think what a blow it was to all her vanity and pride. She fell into violent hysterics[1] immediately, with such screams as reached your brother's ears, as he was sitting in his own dressing-room downstairs, thinking about writing a letter to his steward in the country. So up he flew directly, and a terrible scene took place, for Lucy was come to them by that time, little dreaming what was going on. Poor soul! I pity *her*. And I must say I think she was used very hardly; for your sister scolded like any fury, and soon drove her into a fainting-fit. Nancy, she fell upon her knees, and cried bitterly; and your brother, he walked about the room, and said he did not know what to do. Mrs. Dashwood declared they should not stay a minute longer in the house; and your brother was forced to go down upon *his* knees, to persuade her to let them stay till they had packed up their clothes. *Then* she fell into hysterics again, and he was so frightened that he would send for Mr. Donavan, and Mr. Donavan found the house in all this uproar. The carriage was at the door ready to take my poor cousins away, and they were just stepping in as he came off; poor Lucy in such a condition, he says, she could hardly walk; and Nancy, she was almost as bad. I declare, I have no patience with your sister; and I hope, with all my heart, it will be a match in spite of her. Lord! what a taking poor Edward will be in when he hears of it! To have his

[1] *Hysterics.* No well-conducted young woman of to-day is ever heard of as in hysterics; but the 'elegant females' of a century ago seem very frequently to have resorted to this method of expressing emotion.

love used so scornfully! for they say he is monstrous fond of her, as well he may. I should not wonder if he was to be in the greatest passion; and Mr. Donavan thinks just the same. He and I had a great deal of talk about it; and the best of all is, that he is gone back again to Harley Street, that he may be within call when Mrs. Ferrars is told of it; for she was sent for as soon as ever my cousins left the house, for your sister was sure *she* would be in hysterics too; and so she may, for what I care. I have no pity for either of them. I have no notion of people's making such a to-do about money and greatness. There is no reason on earth why Mr. Edward and Lucy should not marry; for I am sure Mrs. Ferrars may afford to do very well by her son; and though Lucy has next to nothing herself, she knows better than anybody how to make the most of everything; I dare say, if Mrs. Ferrars would only allow him five hundred a year, she would make as good an appearance with it as anybody else would with eight. Lord! how snug they might live in such another cottage as yours, — or a little bigger, — with two maids and two men; and I believe I could help them to a housemaid, for my Betty has a sister out of place that would fit them exactly.'

Here Mrs. Jennings ceased; and as Elinor had had time enough to collect her thoughts, she was able to give such an answer, and make such observations, as the subject might naturally be supposed to produce. Happy to find that she was not suspected of any extraordinary interest in it; that Mrs. Jennings (as she had of late often hoped might be the case) had ceased to imagine her at all attached to Edward; and happy, above all the rest, in the absence of Marianne, she felt very well able to speak of the affair without embarrassment, and to give her judgment, as she believed, with impartiality on the conduct of every one concerned in it.

She could hardly determine what her own expectation of its event really was; though she earnestly tried

to drive away the notion of its being possible to end otherwise at last than in the marriage of Edward and Lucy. What Mrs. Ferrars would say and do, though there could not be a doubt of its nature, she was anxious to hear; and still more anxious to know how Edward would conduct himself. For *him* she felt much compassion, for Lucy very little, — and it cost her some pains to procure that little, — for the rest of the party none at all.

As Mrs. Jennings could talk on no other subject, Elinor soon saw the necessity of preparing Marianne for its discussion. No time was to be lost in undeceiving her, in making her acquainted with the real truth, and in endeavoring to bring her to hear it talked of by others, without betraying that she felt any uneasiness for her sister or any resentment against Edward.

Elinor's office was a painful one. She was going to remove what she really believed to be her sister's chief consolation, — to give such particulars of Edward as she feared would ruin him forever in her good opinion, — and to make Marianne, by a resemblance in their situations, which to *her* fancy would seem strong, feel all her own disappointment over again. But unwelcome as such a task must be, it was necessary to be done, and Elinor therefore hastened to perform it.

She was very far from wishing to dwell on her own feelings, or to represent herself as suffering much, any otherwise than as the self-command she had practised since her first knowledge of Edward's engagements might suggest a hint of what was practicable to Marianne. Her narration was clear and simple; and though it could not be given without emotion, it was not accompanied by violent agitation nor impetuous grief. *That* belonged rather to the hearer; for Marianne listened with horror, and cried excessively. Elinor was to be the comforter of others in her own distresses no less than in theirs; and all the comfort that could be given by assurances of her own composure of mind, and

a very earnest vindication of Edward from every charge but of imprudence, was readily offered.

But Marianne for some time would give credit to neither. Edward seemed a second Willoughby; and acknowledging, as Elinor did, that she *had* loved him most sincerely, could she feel less than herself! As for Lucy Steele, she considered her so totally unamiable, so absolutely incapable of attaching a sensible man, that she could not be persuaded at first to believe, and afterwards to pardon, any former affection of Edward for her. She would not even admit it to have been natural; and Elinor left her to be convinced that it was so by that which only could convince her, a better knowledge of mankind.

Her first communication had reached no farther than to state the fact of the engagement, and the length of time it had existed. Marianne's feelings had then broken in, and put an end to all regularity of detail; and for some time all that could be done was to soothe her distress, lessen her alarms, and combat her resentment. The first question on her side, which led to farther particulars, was, —

'How long has this been known to you, Elinor? Has he written to you?'

'I have known it these four months. When Lucy first came to Barton Park, last November, she told me in confidence of her engagement.'

At these words Marianne's eyes expressed the astonishment which her lips could not utter. After a pause of wonder she exclaimed, —

'Four months! Have you known of this four months?'

Elinor confirmed it.

'What! while attending me in all my misery, has this been on your heart? and I have reproached you for being happy!'

'It was not fit that you should then know how much I was the reverse.'

'Four months!' cried Marianne again. 'So calm! so cheerful! How have you been supported?'

'By feeling that I was doing my duty. My promise to Lucy obliged me to be secret. I owed it to her, therefore, to avoid giving any hint of the truth; and I owed it to my family and friends not to create in them a solicitude about me which it could not be in my power to satisfy.'

Marianne seemed much struck.

'I have very often wished to undeceive yourself and my mother,' added Elinor, 'and once or twice I have attempted it; but without betraying my trust, I never could have convinced you.'

'Four months! and yet you loved him!'

'Yes. But I did not love only him; and while the comfort of others was dear to me, I was glad to spare them from knowing how much I felt. Now, I can think and speak of it with little emotion. I would not have you suffer on my account; for I assure you I no longer suffer materially myself. I have many things to support me. I am not conscious of having provoked the disappointment by any imprudence of my own; I have borne it as much as possible without spreading it farther. I acquit Edward of essential misconduct. I wish him very happy; and I am so sure of his always doing his duty, that though he may harbor some regret, in the end he must become so. Lucy does not want sense; and that is the foundation on which everything good may be built. And after all, Marianne, after all that is bewitching in the idea of a single and constant attachment, and all that can be said of one's happiness depending entirely on any particular person, it is not meant, it is not fit, it is not possible that it should be so. Edward will marry Lucy; he will marry a woman superior in person and understanding to half her sex; and time and habit will teach him to forget that he ever thought another superior to *her*.'

'If such is your way of thinking,' said Marianne, 'if

the loss of what is most valued is so easily to be made up by something else, your resolution, your self-command, are perhaps a little less to be wondered at. They are brought more within my comprehension.'

'I understand you. You do not suppose that I have ever felt much. For four months, Marianne, I have had all this hanging on my mind, without being at liberty to speak of it to a single creature; knowing that it would make you and my mother most unhappy whenever it were explained to you, yet unable to prepare you for it in the least. It was told me, — it was in a manner forced on me by the very person herself whose prior engagement ruined all my prospects; and told me, as I thought, with triumph. This person's suspicions, therefore, I have had to oppose, by endeavoring to appear indifferent where I have been most deeply interested; and it has not been only once; I have had her hopes and exultation to listen to again and again. I have known myself to be divided from Edward forever, without hearing one circumstance that could make me less desire the connection. Nothing has proved him unworthy, nor has anything declared him indifferent to me. I have had to contend against the unkindness of his sister and the insolence of his mother; and have suffered the punishment of an attachment, without enjoying its advantages. And all this has been going on at a time when, as you know too well, it has not been my only unhappiness. If you can think me capable of ever feeling, surely you may suppose that I have suffered *now*. The composure of mind with which I have brought myself at present to consider the matter, the consolation that I have been willing to admit, have been the effect of constant and painful exertion; they did not spring up of themselves; they did not occur to relieve my spirits at first. No, Marianne. *Then*, if I had not been bound to silence, perhaps nothing could have kept me entirely — not even what I owed to my dearest friends — from openly showing that I was *very* unhappy.'

Marianne was quite subdued.

'Oh, Elinor,' she cried, 'you have made me hate myself forever! How barbarous have I been to you,—you, who have been my only comfort, who have borne with me in all my misery, who have seemed to be only suffering for me! Is this my gratitude? Is this the only return I can make you? Because your merit cries out upon myself, I have been trying to do it away.'

The tenderest caresses followed this confession. In such a frame of mind as she was now in, Elinor had no difficulty in obtaining from her whatever promise she required; and at her request Marianne engaged never to speak of the affair to any one with the least appearance of bitterness; to meet Lucy without betraying the smallest increase of dislike to her; and even to see Edward himself, if chance should bring them together, without any diminution of her usual cordiality. These were great concessions; but where Marianne felt that she had injured, no reparation could be too much for her to make.

She performed her promise of being discreet, to admiration. She attended to all that Mrs. Jennings had to say upon the subject, with an unchanging complexion, dissented from her in nothing, and was heard three times to say, 'Yes, ma'am.' She listened to her praise of Lucy with only moving from one chair to another; and when Mrs. Jennings talked of Edward's affection, it cost her only a spasm in her throat. Such advances towards heroism in her sister made Elinor feel equal to anything herself.

The next morning brought a farther trial of it, in a visit from their brother, who came with a most serious aspect to talk over the dreadful affair, and bring them news of his wife.

'You have heard, I suppose,' said he, with great solemnity, as soon as he was seated, 'of the very shocking discovery that took place under our roof yesterday.'

They all looked their assent; it seemed too awful a moment for speech.

'Your sister,' he continued, 'has suffered dreadfully. Mrs. Ferrars too — in short, it has been a scene of such complicated distress — but I will hope that the storm may be weathered without our being any of us quite overcome. Poor Fanny! she was in hysterics all yesterday. But I would not alarm you too much. Donavan says there is nothing materially to be apprehended; her constitution is a good one, and her resolution equal to anything. She has borne it with all the fortitude of an angel! She says she never shall think well of anybody again; and one cannot wonder at it, after being so deceived, — meeting with such ingratitude, where so much kindness had been shown, so much confidence had been placed! It was quite out of the benevolence of her heart that she had asked these young women to her house; merely because she thought they deserved some attention, were harmless, well-behaved girls, and would be pleasant companions; for otherwise we both wished very much to have invited you and Marianne to be with us while your kind friend there was attending her daughter. And now to be so rewarded! "I wish, with all my heart," says poor Fanny, in her affectionate way, "that we had asked your sisters instead of them."'

Here he stopped to be thanked; which being done, he went on.

'What poor Mrs. Ferrars suffered when first Fanny broke it to her, is not to be described. While she with the truest affection had been planning a most eligible connection for him, was it to be supposed that he could be all the time secretly engaged to another person! Such a suspicion could never have entered her head! If she suspected *any* prepossession elsewhere, it could not be in *that* quarter. "*There*, to be sure," said she, "I might have thought myself safe." She was quite in an agony. We consulted together, however, as to what should be done, and at last she determined to send for Edward. He came; but I am sorry to relate what ensued. All that Mrs. Ferrars could say to make him

put an end to the engagement, assisted too, as you may well suppose, by my arguments and Fanny's entreaties, was of no avail. Duty, affection, everything was disregarded. I never thought Edward so stubborn, so unfeeling before. His mother explained to him her liberal designs in case of his marrying Miss Morton; told him she would settle on him the Norfolk estate, which, clear of land-tax, brings in a good thousand a year; offered even, when matters grew desperate, to make it twelve hundred; and in opposition to this, if he still persisted in this low connection, represented to him the certain penury that must attend the match. His own two thousand pounds, she protested, should be his all; she would never see him again; and so far would she be from affording him the smallest assistance, that if he were to enter into any profession with a view of better support, she would do all in her power to prevent him advancing in it.'

Here Marianne, in an ecstasy of indignation, clapped her hands together, and cried, 'Gracious God! can this be possible?'

'Well may you wonder, Marianne,' replied her brother, 'at the obstinacy which could resist such arguments as these. Your exclamation is very natural.'

Marianne was going to retort, but she remembered her promises, and forbore.

'All this, however,' he continued, 'was urged in vain. Edward said very little; but what he did say was in the most determined manner. Nothing should prevail on him to give up his engagement. He would stand to it, cost him what it might.'

'Then,' cried Mrs Jennings with blunt sincerity, no longer able to be silent, 'he has acted like an honest man! I beg your pardon, Mr. Dashwood, but if he had done otherwise, I should have thought him a rascal. I have some little concern in the business as well as yourself, for Lucy Steele is my cousin; and I believe

there is not a better kind of girl in the world, nor one who more deserves a good husband.'

John Dashwood was greatly astonished; but his nature was calm, not open to provocation; and he never wished to offend anybody, especially anybody of good fortune. He therefore replied without any resentment,—

'I would by no means speak disrespectfully of any relation of yours, madam. Miss Lucy Steele is, I dare say, a very deserving young woman; but in the present case, you know, the connection must be impossible. And to have entered into a secret engagement with a young man under her uncle's care, the son of a woman especially of such very large fortune as Mrs Ferrars, is, perhaps, altogether a little extraordinary. In short, I do not mean to reflect upon the behavior of any person whom you have a regard for, Mrs. Jennings. We all wish her extremely happy; and Mrs. Ferrars's conduct throughout the whole has been such as every conscientious, good mother, in like circumstances, would adopt. It has been dignified and liberal. Edward has drawn his own lot, and I fear it will be a bad one.'

Marianne sighed out her similar apprehension; and Elinor's heart wrung for the feelings of Edward, while braving his mother's threats, for a woman who could not reward him.

'Well, sir,' said Mrs. Jennings, 'and how did it end?'

'I am sorry to say, ma'am, in a most unhappy rupture. Edward is dismissed forever from his mother's notice. He left her house yesterday, but where he is gone, or whether he is still in town, I do not know; for *we* of course can make no inquiry.'

'Poor young man! and what is to become of him?'

'What, indeed, ma'am! It is a melancholy consideration. Born to the prospect of such affluence! I cannot conceive a situation more deplorable. The interest of two thousand pounds — how can a man live on it? And when to that is added the recollection that he might, but

for his own folly, within three months have been in the receipt of two thousand five hundred a year (for Miss Morton has thirty thousand pounds), I cannot picture to myself a more wretched condition. We must all feel for him; and the more so, because it is totally out of our power to assist him.'

'Poor young man!' cried Mrs. Jennings, 'I am sure he should be very welcome to bed and board at my house; and so I would tell him if I could see him. It is not fit that he should be living about at his own charge now, at lodgings and taverns.'

Elinor's heart thanked her for such kindness towards Edward, though she could not forbear smiling at the form of it.

'If he would only have done as well by himself,' said John Dashwood, 'as all his friends were disposed to do by him, he might now have been in his proper situation, and would have wanted for nothing; but as it is, it must be out of anybody's power to assist him. And there is one thing more preparing against him, which must be worse than all; his mother has determined, with a very natural kind of spirit, to settle *that* estate upon Robert immediately, which might have been Edward's, on proper conditions. I left her this morning with her lawyer, talking over the business.'

'Well!' said Mrs. Jennings, 'that is *her* revenge. Everybody has a way of their own. But I don't think mine would be, to make one son independent because another had plagued me.'

Marianne got up and walked about the room.

'Can anything be more galling to the spirit of a man,' continued John, 'than to see his younger brother in possession of an estate which might have been his own? Poor Edward! I feel for him sincerely.'

A few minutes more, spent in the same kind of effusion, concluded his visit; and with repeated assurances to his sisters that he really believed there was no material danger in Fanny's indisposition, and that they

need not therefore be very uneasy about it, he went away, leaving the three ladies unanimous in their sentiments on the present occasion, as far at least as it regarded Mrs. Ferrars's conduct, the Dashwoods', and Edward's.

Marianne's indignation burst forth as soon as he quitted the room; and as her vehemence made reserve impossible in Elinor, and unnecessary in Mrs. Jennings, they all joined in a very spirited critique upon the party.

[Chapters II. — XIII. give in detail the visit of the Dashwoods to the Palmers at Cleveland; Marianne's severe illness there, occasioned in great measure by her own imprudence and abandonment to her feelings; Willoughby's partial justification of himself to Elinor; Colonel Brandon's growing attachment for Marianne; Lucy Steele's elopement with Robert Ferrars; and the engagement of Elinor and Edward Ferrars.]

CHAPTER XIV.

After a proper resistance on the part of Mrs. Ferrars, just so violent and so steady as to preserve her from that reproach which she always seemed fearful of incurring, — the reproach of being too amiable, — Edward was admitted to her presence, and pronounced to be again her son.

Her family had of late been exceedingly fluctuating. For many years of her life she had had two sons; but the crime and annihilation of Edward, a few weeks ago, had robbed her of one; the similar annihilation of Robert had left her for a fortnight without any; and now, by the resuscitation of Edward, she had one again.

In spite of his being allowed once more to live, however, he did not feel the continuance of his existence secure till he had revealed his present engagement; for the publication of that circumstance, he feared, might

give a sudden turn to his constitution, and carry him off as rapidly as before. With apprehensive caution, therefore, it was revealed; and he was listened to with unexpected calmness. Mrs. Ferrars at first reasonably endeavored to dissuade him from marrying Miss Dashwood, by every argument in her power; told him that in Miss Morton he would have a woman of higher rank and larger fortune; and enforced the assertion by observing that Miss Morton was the daughter of a nobleman with thirty thousand pounds, while Miss Dashwood was only the daughter of a private gentleman with no more than *three;* but when she found that, though perfectly admitting the truth of her representation, he was by no means inclined to be guided by it, she judged it wisest, from the experience of the past, to submit; and therefore, after such an ungracious delay as she owed to her own dignity, and as served to prevent every suspicion of good-will, she issued her decree of consent to the marriage of Edward and Elinor.

What she would engage to do towards augmenting their income was next to be considered; and here it plainly appeared, that though Edward was now her only son, he was by no means her eldest; for while Robert was inevitably endowed with a thousand pounds a year, not the smallest objection was made against Edward's taking orders for the sake of two hundred and fifty at the utmost; nor was anything promised, either for the present or in future, beyond the ten thousand pounds which had been given with Fanny.

It was as much, however, as was desired, and more than was expected, by Edward and Elinor; and Mrs. Ferrars herself, by her shuffling excuses, seemed the only person surprised at her not giving more.

With an income quite sufficient to their wants thus secured to them, they had nothing to wait for after Edward was in possession of the living but the readiness of the house, to which Colonel Brandon, with an eager desire for the accommodation of Elinor, was

making considerable improvements; and after waiting some time for their completion, — after experiencing, as usual, a thousand disappointments and delays, from the unaccountable dilatoriness of the workmen, — Elinor, as usual, broke through the first positive resolution, of not marrying till everything was ready; and the ceremony took place in Barton church early in the autumn.

The first month after their marriage was spent with their friend at the mansion-house; from whence they could superintend the progress of the parsonage, and direct everything as they liked on the spot; could choose papers, project shrubberies, and invent a sweep.[1] Mrs. Jennings's prophecies, though rather jumbled together, were chiefly fulfilled; for she was able to visit Edward and his wife in their parsonage by Michaelmas; and she found in Elinor and her husband, as she really believed, one of the happiest couples in the world. They had, in fact, nothing to wish for but the marriage of Colonel Brandon and Marianne, and rather better pasturage for their cows.

They were visited on their first settling by almost all their relations and friends. Mrs. Ferrars came to inspect the happiness which she was almost ashamed of having authorized; and even the Dashwoods were at the expense of a journey from Sussex to do them honor.

'I will not say that I am disappointed,' my dear sister,' said John, as they were walking together one morning before the gates of Delaford House, '*that* would be saying too much; for certainly you have been one of the most fortunate young women in the world as it is. But I confess it would give me great pleasure to call Colonel Brandon brother. His property here, his place, his house, — everything is in such respectable and excellent condition! And his woods, — I have not seen such timber anywhere in Dorsetshire as there is

[1] *Sweep.* A winding carriage road.

now standing in Delaford Hanger![1] And though, perhaps, Marianne may not seem exactly the person to attract him, yet I think it would altogether be advisable for you to have them now frequently staying with you; for as Colonel Brandon seems a great deal at home, nobody can tell what may happen; for when people are much thrown together, and see little of anybody else, — and it will always be in your power to set her off to advantage, and so forth. In short, you may as well give her a chance: you understand me.'

But though Mrs. Ferrars *did* come to see them, and always treated them with the make-believe of decent affection, they were never insulted by her real favor and preference. *That* was due to the folly of Robert and the cunning of his wife, and it was earned by them before many months had passed away. The selfish sagacity of the latter, which had at first drawn Robert into the scrape, was the principal instrument of his deliverance from it; for her respectful humility, assiduous attentions, and endless flatteries, as soon as the smallest opening was given for their exercise, reconciled Mrs. Ferrars to his choice, and re-established him completely in her favor.

The whole of Lucy's behavior in the affair, and the prosperity which crowned it, therefore, may be held forth as a most encouraging instance of what an earnest, an unceasing attention to self-interest, however its progress may be apparently obstructed, will do in securing every advantage of fortune, with no other sacrifice than that of time and conscience. When Robert first sought her acquaintance, and privately visited her in Bartlett's Buildings, it was only with the view imputed to him by his brother. He merely meant to persuade her to give up the engagement; and as there could be nothing to overcome but the affection of both, he naturally expected that one or two interviews

[1] *Hanger.* A sharp hill-slope, in this case evidently a heavily wooded one.

would settle the matter. In that point, however, and that only, he erred; for though Lucy soon gave him hopes that his eloquence would convince her in *time*, another visit, another conversation, was always wanted to produce this conviction. Some doubts always lingered in her mind when they parted, which could only be removed by another half-hour's discourse with himself. His attendance was by this means secured, and the rest followed in course. Instead of talking of Edward, they came gradually to talk only of Robert, — a subject on which he had always more to say than on any other, and in which she soon betrayed an interest even equal to his own; and, in short, it became speedily evident to both that he had entirely supplanted his brother. He was proud of his conquest, proud of tricking Edward, and very proud of marrying privately without his mother's consent. What immediately followed is known. They passed some months in great happiness at Dawlish: for she had many relations and old acquaintances to cut, and he drew several plans for magnificent cottages; and from thence returning to town procured the forgiveness of Mrs. Ferrars, by the simple expedient of asking it, which, at Lucy's instigation, was adopted. The forgiveness at first, indeed, as was reasonable, comprehended only Robert; and Lucy, who had owed his mother no duty, and therefore could have transgressed none, still remained some weeks longer unpardoned. But perseverance in humility of conduct and messages in self-condemnation for Robert's offence, and gratitude for the unkindness she was treated with, procured her in time the haughty notice which overcame her by its graciousness, and led soon afterwards, by rapid degrees, to the highest state of affection and influence. Lucy became as necessary to Mrs. Ferrars as either Robert or Fanny; and while Edward was never cordially forgiven for having once intended to marry her, and Elinor, though superior to her in fortune and birth, was spoken of as

an intruder, *she* was in everything considered, and always openly acknowledged, to be a favorite child. They settled in town, received very liberal assistance from Mrs. Ferrars, were on the best terms imaginable with the Dashwoods, and, setting aside the jealousies and ill-will continually subsisting between Fanny and Lucy, in which their husbands of course took a part, as well as the frequent domestic disagreements between Robert and Lucy themselves, nothing could exceed the harmony in which they all lived together.

What Edward had done to forfeit the right of eldest son might have puzzled many people to find out; and what Robert had done to succeed to it might have puzzled them still more. It was an arrangement, however, justified in its effects, if not in its cause; for nothing ever appeared in Robert's style of living or of talking to give a suspicion of his regretting the extent of his income, as either leaving his brother too little, or bringing himself too much; and if Edward might be judged from the ready discharge of his duties in every particular, from an increasing attachment to his wife and his home, and from the regular cheerfulness of his spirits, he might be supposed no less contented with his lot, no less free from every wish of an exchange.

Elinor's marriage divided her as little from her family as could well be contrived, without rendering the cottage at Barton entirely useless, for her mother and sisters spent much more than half their time with her. Mrs. Dashwood was acting on motives of policy as well as pleasure in the frequency of her visits at Delaford; for her wish of bringing Marianne and Colonel Brandon together was hardly less earnest, though rather more liberal, than what John had expressed. It was now her darling object. Precious as was the company of her daughter to her, she desired nothing so much as to give up its constant enjoyment to her valued friend; and to see Marianne settled at the mansion-house was equally the wish of Edward and Elinor. They each felt his

sorrows, and their own obligations; and Marianne, by general consent, was to be the reward of all.

With such a confederacy against her, with a knowledge so intimate of his goodness, with a conviction of his fond attachment to herself, which at last — though long after it was observable to everybody else — burst on her, what could she do?

Marianne Dashwood was born to an extraordinary fate. She was born to discover the falsehood of her own opinions, and to counteract, by her conduct, her most favorite maxims. She was born to overcome an affection formed so late in life as at seventeen, and with no sentiment superior to strong esteem and lively friendship, voluntarily to give her hand to another! and *that* other a man who had suffered no less than herself under the event of a former attachment, whom two years before she had considered too old to be married, and who still sought the constitutional safeguard of a flannel waistcoat!

But so it was. Instead of falling a sacrifice to an irresistible passion, as once she had fondly flattered herself with expecting, instead of remaining even forever with her mother, and finding her only pleasures in retirement and study, as afterwards in her more calm and sober judgment she had determined on, she found herself at nineteen submitting to new attachments, entering on new duties, placed in a new home, a wife, the mistress of a family, and the patroness of a village.

Colonel Brandon was now as happy as all those who best loved him believed he deserved to be: in Marianne he was consoled for every past affliction: her regard and her society restored his mind to animation and his spirits to cheerfulness; and that Marianne found her own happiness in forming his, was equally the persuasion and delight of each observing friend. Marianne could never love by halves; and her whole heart became, in time, as much devoted to her husband as it had once been to Willoughby.

Willoughby could not hear of her marriage without a pang; and his punishment was soon afterwards complete, in the voluntary forgiveness of Mrs. Smith, who, by stating his marriage with a woman of character as the source of her clemency, gave him reason for believing that had he behaved with honor towards Marianne he might at once have been happy and rich. That his repentance of misconduct, which thus brought its own punishment, was sincere, need not be doubted; nor that he long thought of Colonel Brandon with envy, and of Marianne with regret. But that he was forever inconsolable, that he fled from society, or contracted an habitual gloom of temper, or died of a broken heart, must not be depended on; for he did neither. He lived to exert, and frequently to enjoy himself. His wife was not always out of humor, nor his home always uncomfortable; and in his breed of horses and dogs, and in sporting of every kind, he found no inconsiderable degree of domestic felicity.

For Marianne, however, in spite of his incivility in surviving her loss, he always retained that decided regard which interested him in everything that befell her, and made her his secret standard of perfection in woman; and many a rising beauty would be slighted by him in after days as bearing no comparison with Mrs. Brandon.

Mrs. Dashwood was prudent enough to remain at the cottage without attempting a removal to Delaford; and, fortunately for Sir John and Mrs. Jennings, when Marianne was taken from them, Margaret had reached an age highly suitable for dancing, and not very ineligible for being supposed to have a lover.

Between Barton and Delaford there was that constant communication which strong family affection would naturally dictate; and among the merits and the happiness of Elinor and Marianne, let it not be ranked as the least considerable that, though sisters, and living almost within sight of each other, they could live without dis-

agreement between themselves, or producing coolness between their husbands.[1]

[1] *Sense and Sensibility* seems to have been an especial favorite with its author, and we find in her letters to her sister Cassandra several allusions to 'S. and S.' while it was passing through the press in the spring of 1811.

NORTHANGER ABBEY.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Mr. Allen: A personage who appears but seldom in the story. He is represented as a sensible, intelligent man of middle life, and quite superior to his rather insipid wife.

James Morland: Brother to Catherine Morland. An amiable young man who falls in love with Isabella Thorpe and is finally jilted by her.

Captain Tilney: Eldest son of General Tilney. A young man often referred to in the course of the story, but who plays no very prominent part. He does not seem to be endowed with any high principles, and succeeds very readily in disengaging the affections of Isabella Thorpe from John Morland and attaching them to himself.

General Tilney: The owner of Northanger Abbey. A man of uncertain temper, who endeavors to foster an affection between his son Henry and Catherine Morland while he believes her to be an heiress. Discovering his mistake while she is visiting his daughter at Northanger Abbey, he in a fit of temper gives orders for her to leave at once.

Rev. Henry Tilney: Second son of General Tilney. A young man of twenty-five, of a mildly satirical turn of mind, but sensible and good-natured. He falls in love with Catherine Morland, and eventually marries her.

John Thorpe: Son of Mrs. Thorpe. 'A stout young man of middling height, who, with a plain face and ungraceful form, seemed fearful of being too handsome unless he wore the dress of a groom, and too much like a gentleman unless he were easy where he ought to be civil, and impudent where he might be allowed to be easy.' He falls in love with Catherine, who has no liking for him.

Mrs. Allen: Wife of Mr. Allen. A friend of Catherine, who is taken by her to visit at Bath. She is feebly commonplace, and is one of those women 'whose society can raise no other emotion than surprise at there being any men in the world who could like them well enough to marry them.'

Mrs. Hughes: A friend of the Tilneys. A person to whom occasional reference is made, but who speaks but once or twice.

Catherine Morland: Eldest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Morland. A simple-hearted, pleasing girl of seventeen, whose romantic imagination has been stimulated by Mrs. Radcliffe's novels, and others of the same kind. She is always expecting to come upon some dreadful secret, or meet with some mysterious adventure, till events occur to restore her to common sense. She falls in love with Henry Tilney almost at first sight.

Sarah Morland: A younger daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Morland. A minor personage, who is introduced but once or twice, and speaks no oftener.

Mrs. Morland: The wife of Mr. Morland, a clergyman who does not figure except by implication as one of the *dramatis personæ*. 'A woman of useful plain sense, with a good temper.' She has little to do with the conduct of the tale.

Mrs. Thorpe: A well-meaning, rather commonplace widow, who admires all that her children think it proper to do. She is visiting at Bath at the same time as her friend Mrs. Allen.

Isabella Thorpe: Eldest daughter of Mrs. Thorpe. A young woman of twenty-one, quite pretty, and beloved by James Morland. She professes a violent friendship for Catherine, and for a time can not see her too often. Feeling secure of Captain Tilney's love, she jilts young Morland, but is soon deserted by the fickle captain.

Anne and Maria Thorpe: Daughters of Mrs. Thorpe. Personages of no importance in the story, and who have but one or two remarks to make.

Eleanor Tilney: Daughter of General Tilney. A pleasant, sensible girl, 'capable of being young, attractive, and at a ball without wanting to fix the attention of every man near her, and without exaggerated feelings of ecstatic delight or inconceivable vexation on every trifling occurrence.'

Bath is the locality of nearly two-thirds of the story, and Northanger Abbey in Gloucestershire of much of the remainder; while that of the last three chapters shifts to Fullerton, a small village in Wiltshire, where the Morlands live. The time covered by the events of the novel is about one year.

NORTHANGER ABBEY.

VOLUME THE FIRST.

CHAPTER I.

No one who had ever seen Catherine Morland in her infancy would have supposed her born to be a heroine. Her situation in life, the character of her father and mother, her own person and disposition, were all equally against her. Her father was a clergyman, without being neglected or poor, and a very respectable man, though his name was Richard, and he had never been handsome. He had a considerable independence, besides two good livings; and he was not in the least addicted to locking up his daughters. Her mother was a woman of useful plain sense, with a good temper, and, what is more remarkable, with a good constitution. She had three sons before Catherine was born; and instead of dying in bringing the latter into the world, as anybody might expect, she still lived on, — lived to have six children more, to see them growing up around her, and to enjoy excellent health herself. A family of ten children will be always called a fine family, where there are heads and arms and legs enough for the number; but the Morlands had little other right to the word, for they were in general very plain, and Catherine, for many years of her life, as plain as any. She had a thin, awkward figure; a sallow skin, without color; dark, lank hair, and strong features. So much for her person; and not less unpropitious for heroism seemed her mind. She was fond of all boys' plays, and

greatly preferred cricket, not merely to dolls, but to the more heroic enjoyments of infancy, — nursing a dormouse, feeding a canary-bird, or watering a rose-bush. Indeed, she had no taste for a garden: and if she gathered flowers at all, it was chiefly for the pleasure of mischief; at least, so it was conjectured from her always preferring those which she was forbidden to take. Such were her propensities; her abilities were quite as extraordinary. She never could learn or understand anything before she was taught; and sometimes not even then, for she was often inattentive, and occasionally stupid. Her mother was three months in teaching her only to repeat the 'Beggar's Petition;'[1] and after all, her next sister, Sally, could say it better than she did. Not that Catherine was always stupid, — by no means; she learned the fable of 'The Hare and many Friends' as quickly as any girl in England. Her mother wished her to learn music; and Catherine was sure she should like it, for she was very fond of tinkling the keys of the old forlorn spinet;[2] so at eight years old she began. She learned a year, and could not bear it; and Mrs. Morland, who did not insist on her daughters being accomplished in spite of incapacity or distaste, allowed her to leave off. The day which dismissed the music-master was one of the happiest of Catherine's life. Her taste for drawing[3] was not superior; though whenever she could obtain the outside of a letter from her mother, or seize upon any other odd piece of paper,

[1] *The Beggar's Petition.* The title of a poem by Rev. Thomas Moss (1740–1808), which begins with the famous line, —

'Pity the sorrows of a poor old man.'

[2] *Spinet.* In Miss Austen's time the piano had not entirely supplanted its immediate predecessor, the spinet, and a few of the latter still lingered in country drawing-rooms at the close of the last century.

[3] Miss Keddie observes that 'Jane Austen may have had in her mind Mrs. Radcliffe's heroines, to whom sketching from nature seems to have come by nature, — who were all, as a matter of course, accomplished artists.'

she did what she could in that way, by drawing houses and trees, hens and chickens, all very much like one another. Writing and accounts she was taught by her father; French by her mother. Her proficiency in either was not remarkable, and she shirked her lessons in both whenever she could. What a strange, unaccountable character! For with all these symptoms of profligacy, at ten years old she had neither a bad heart nor a bad temper; was seldom stubborn, scarcely ever quarrelsome, and very kind to the little ones, with few interruptions of tyranny; she was moreover noisy and wild, hated confinement and cleanliness, and loved nothing so well in the world as rolling down the green slope at the back of the house.

Such was Catherine Morland at ten. At fifteen appearances were mending; she began to curl her hair, and long for balls; her complexion improved, her features were softened by plumpness and color, her eyes gained more animation and her figure more consequence. Her love of dirt gave way to an inclination for finery, and she grew clean as she grew smart; she had now the pleasure of sometimes hearing her father and mother remark on her personal improvement. 'Catherine grows quite a good-looking girl; she is almost pretty to-day,' were words which caught her ears now and then; and how welcome were the sounds! To look *almost* pretty is an acquisition of higher delight to a girl who has been looking plain the first fifteen years of her life, than a beauty from her cradle can ever receive.

Mrs. Morland was a very good woman, and wished to see her children everything they ought to be; but her time was so much occupied in lying-in, and teaching the little ones, that her elder daughters were inevitably left to shift for themselves; and it was not very wonderful that Catherine, who had by nature nothing heroic about her, should prefer cricket, base ball,[1] riding on horse-

[1] *Base ball.* It is hardly necessary to state that the game, as played in Miss Austen's time, was a much simpler amusement than

back, and running about the country at the age of fourteen, to books, — or at least books of information, — for, provided that nothing like useful knowledge could be gained from them, provided they were all story and no reflection, she had never any objections to books at all. But from fifteen to seventeen she was in training for a heroine; she read all such works as heroines must read to supply their memories with those quotations which are so serviceable and so soothing in the vicissitudes of their eventful lives.

From Pope, she learned to censure those who

> '— bear about the mockery of woe.'

From Gray, that

> 'Many a flower is born to blush unseen,
> And waste its sweetness on the desert air.'

From Thomson, that

> '— it is a delightful task
> To teach the young idea how to shoot.'

And from Shakespeare[1] she gained a great store of information; amongst the rest, that

> ' — Trifles, light as air,
> Are, to the jealous, confirmation strong,
> As proofs of Holy Writ.'

That

> 'The poor beetle, which we tread upon,
> In corporal sufferance feels a pang as great
> As when a giant dies.'

And that a young woman in love always looks

> '— like Patience on a monument,
> Smiling at Grief.'

the one now known by this name, and corresponded to the much less difficult game known as 'rounders.'

[1] 'Catherine studies Pope and Gray, Thomson and Shakespeare. Can Catherine's sisters, in these days of much cramming and innumerable pursuits, bring forward even so respectable a list of authors with whom the young readers are intimately acquainted?' — MISS KEDDIE.

So far her improvement was sufficient, and in many other points she came on exceedingly well; for though she could not write sonnets, she brought herself to read them; and though there seemed no chance of her throwing a whole party into raptures by a prelude on the piano-forte, of her own composition, she could listen to other people's performance with very little fatigue. Her greatest deficiency was in the pencil. She had no notion of drawing, not enough even to attempt a sketch of her lover's profile, that she might be detected in the design. There she fell miserably short of the true heroic height. At present she did not know her own poverty, for she had no lover to portray. She had reached the age of seventeen without having seen one amiable youth who could call forth her sensibility; without having inspired one real passion; without having excited even any admiration but what was very moderate and very transient. This was strange indeed! But strange things may be generally accounted for if their cause be fairly searched out. There was not one lord in the neighborhood; no, not even a baronet. There was not one family among their acquaintance who had reared and supported a boy accidentally found at their door, not one young man whose origin was unknown. Her father had no ward, and the squire of the parish no children.

But when a young lady is to be a heroine, the perverseness of forty surrounding families cannot prevent her. Something must and will happen to throw a hero in her way.

Mr. Allen, who owned the chief of the property about Fullerton,[1] the village in Wiltshire[2] where the Morlands lived, was ordered to Bath[3] for the benefit of a gouty

[1] *Fullerton.* A hamlet with railway station in Wherwell parish, North Hants, three miles south of Andover. — BARTHOLOMEW'S *Gazetteer of the British Isles.*

[2] *Wiltshire.* One of the southwest counties of England. It is mainly in the diocese of Salisbury.

[3] *Bath.* The chief city of Somersetshire, and in Miss Austen's time the most fashionable watering-place in England.

constitution; and his lady, a good-humored woman, fond of Miss Morland, and probably aware that if adventures will not befall a young lady in her own village she must seek them abroad, invited her to go with them. Mr. and Mrs. Morland were all compliance, and Catherine all happiness.

[In Chapters II. — IV. Catherine attends a ball at Bath with the Allens, meets Henry Tilney, whom she greatly admires, and becomes acquainted with the Thorpe family.]

CHAPTER V.

CATHERINE was not so much engaged at the theatre that evening, in returning the nods and smiles of Miss Thorpe, though they certainly claimed much of her leisure, as to forget to look with an inquiring eye for Mr. Tilney in every box which her eye could reach; but she looked in vain. Mr. Tilney was no fonder of the play than the Pump-room.[1] She hoped to be more fortunate the next day; and when her wishes for fine weather were answered by seeing a beautiful morning, she hardly felt a doubt of it; for a fine Sunday in Bath empties every house of its inhabitants, and all the world appears, on such an occasion, to walk about and tell their acquaintance what a charming day it is.

As soon as divine service was over, the Thorpes and Allens eagerly joined each other; and after staying long enough in the Pump-room to discover that the crowd was insupportable, and that there was not a genteel face to be seen, which everybody discovers every Sunday throughout the season, they hastened away to the Crescent, to breathe the fresh air of better company. Here Catherine and Isabella, arm in arm,

[1] Pump-room. A fashionable establishment at the springs, much resorted to in the last century for drinking the waters and for amusement. It is eighty-five feet long by fifty-six wide, and contains a statue of Beau Nash.

again tasted the sweets of friendship in an unreserved conversation; they talked much, and with much enjoyment, but again was Catherine disappointed in her hope of re-seeing her partner. He was nowhere to be met with; every search for him was equally unsuccessful, in morning lounges or evening assemblies; neither at the upper nor lower rooms, at dressed or undressed balls, was he perceivable; nor among the walkers, the horsemen, or the curricle[1]-drivers of the morning. His name was not in the Pump-room book, and curiosity could do no more. He must be gone from Bath; yet he had not mentioned that his stay would be so short! This sort of mysteriousness, which is always so becoming in a hero, threw a fresh grace, in Catherine's imagination, around his person and manners, and increased her anxiety to know more of him. From the Thorpes she could learn nothing, for they had been only two days in Bath before they met with Mrs. Allen. It was a subject, however, in which she often indulged with her fair friend, from whom she received every possible encouragement to continue to think of him; and his impression on her fancy was not suffered therefore to weaken. Isabella was very sure that he must be a charming young man; and was equally sure that he must have been delighted with her dear Catherine, and would therefore shortly return. She liked him the better for being a clergyman, 'for she must confess herself very partial to the profession;' and something like a sigh escaped her as she said it. Perhaps Catherine was wrong in not demanding the cause of that gentle emotion; but she was not experienced enough in the finesse of love, or the duties of friendship, to know when delicate raillery was properly called for, or when a confidence should be forced.

Mrs. Allen was now quite happy — quite satisfied with Bath. She had found some acquaintance; had

[1] *Curricle.* A two-wheeled chaise drawn by two horses abreast.

been so lucky, too, as to find in them the family of a most worthy old friend; and, as the completion of good fortune, had found these friends by no means so expensively dressed as herself. Her daily expressions were no longer, 'I wish we had some acquaintance in Bath!' They were changed into, 'How glad I am we have met with Mrs. Thorpe!' and she was as eager in promoting the intercourse of the two families as her young charge and Isabella themselves could be; never satisfied with the day unless she spent the chief of it by the side of Mrs. Thorpe, in what they called conversation; but in which there was scarcely ever any exchange of opinion, and not often any resemblance of subject, for Mrs. Thorpe talked chiefly of her children, and Mrs. Allen of her gowns.

The progress of the friendship between Catherine and Isabella was quick as its beginning had been warm; and they passed so rapidly through every gradation of increasing tenderness, that there was shortly no fresh proof of it to be given to their friends or themselves. They called each other by their Christian name, were always arm in arm when they walked, pinned up each other's train for the dance, and were not to be divided in the set; and if a rainy morning deprived them of other enjoyments, they were still resolute in meeting, in defiance of wet and dirt, and shut themselves up to read novels together.[1] Yes, novels; for I will not adopt that ungenerous and impolitic custom, so common with novel-writers, of degrading, by their contemptuous censure, the very performances to the number of which they are themselves adding: joining with their greatest enemies in bestowing the harshest epithets on such works, and scarcely ever permitting them to be read by their own heroine, who, if she accidentally take

[1] The strong common-sense of Miss Austen saw through the popular literary affectation of the time, and recognizing that it was an affectation *only*, and had no substantial basis, she took an early opportunity to speak her mind freely upon the subject.

up a novel, is sure to turn over its insipid pages with disgust. Alas! if the heroine of one novel be not patronized by the heroine of another, from whom can she expect protection and regard? I cannot approve of it. Let us leave it to the reviewers to abuse such effusions of fancy at their leisure, and over every new novel to talk in threadbare strains of the trash with which the press now groans. Let us not desert one another; we are an injured body. Although our productions have afforded more extensive and unaffected pleasure than those of any other literary corporation in the world, no species of composition has been so much decried. From pride, ignorance, or fashion, our foes are almost as many as our readers; and while the abilities of the nine-hundredth abridger of the History of England, or of the man who collects and publishes in a volume some dozen lines of Milton, Pope, and Prior, with a paper from the *Spectator*, and a chapter from Sterne, are eulogized by a thousand pens, — there seems almost a general wish of decrying the capacity and undervaluing the labor of the novelist, and of slighting the performances which have only genius, wit, and taste to recommend them. 'I am no novel reader. — I seldom look into novels. — Do not imagine that *I* often read novels. — It is really very well for a novel.' Such is the common cant. 'And what are you reading, Miss ——?' 'Oh, it is only a novel!' replies the young lady; while she lays down her book with affected indifference or momentary shame. 'It is only *Cecilia*,[1] or *Camilla*,[2] or *Belinda*;[3] or, in short, only some work

[1] *Cecilia.* A novel by Madame d'Arblay (1750–1842), published in 1782. Miss Kavanagh calls it 'an acute mirror of the passing follies of the day.' It was exceedingly popular, and brought its author the sum of two thousand pounds.

[2] *Camilla.* A novel by Madame d'Arblay, published in 1796. Like its predecessors, *Evelina* and *Cecilia*, it was very popular in its day, but it is manifestly inferior to either of them.

[3] *Belinda.* A moral romance by Miss Edgeworth (1767–1849), published in 1801. According to Mr. Austen-Leigh, *Northanger*

in which the greatest powers of the mind are displayed, in which the most thorough knowledge of human nature, the happiest delineation of its varieties, the liveliest effusions of wit and humor, are conveyed to the world in the best-chosen language. Now, had the same young lady been engaged with a volume of the *Spectator*, instead of such a work, how proudly would she have produced the book and told its name, though the chances must be against her being occupied by any part of that voluminous publication of which either the matter or manner would not disgust a young person of taste; the substance of its papers so often consisting in the statement of improbable circumstances, unnatural characters, and topics of conversation which no longer concern any one living; and their language, too, frequently so coarse as to give no very favorable idea of the age that could endure it.[1]

CHAPTER VI.

THE following conversation, which took place between the two friends in the Pump-room one morning, after an acquaintance of eight or nine days, is given as a specimen of their very warm attachment, and of the delicacy, discretion, originality of thought, and literary taste which marked the reasonableness of that attachment.

Abbey was written in 1798, and prepared for the press in 1803. If this is the case, the allusion to *Belinda*, which was not published when Miss Austen was writing *Northanger Abbey*, must have been one of the touches added in the revision; or, quite probably, the entire passage relating to novel reading and writing may have been added at this later period.

[1] Few people in Miss Austen's day would have dared to speak their minds as freely in this particular instance as she has done; and though she may have gone a little too far in her condemnation of the *Spectator*, yet when we remember how *Spectator*-rid was the literary taste of the time, her spirited revolt against the tyranny of its rigid enforcement is very natural.

They met by appointment; and as Isabella had arrived nearly five minutes before her friend, her first address naturally was, 'My dearest creature, what can have made you so late? I have been waiting for you at least this age!'

'Have you, indeed! I am very sorry for it, but really I thought I was in very good time. It is but just one. I hope you have not been here long?'

'Oh, these ten ages at least! I am sure I have been here this half-hour. But now let us go and sit down at the other end of the room and enjoy ourselves. I have a hundred things to say to you. In the first place, I was so afraid it would rain this morning, just as I wanted to set off; it looked very showery, and that would have thrown me into agonies! Do you know, I saw the prettiest hat you can imagine in a shop window in Milsom Street,[1] just now, — very like yours, only with coquelicot[2] ribands[3] instead of green; I quite longed for it. But, my dearest Catherine, what have you been doing with yourself all this morning? Have you gone on with *Udolpho*?'[4]

'Yes, I have been reading it ever since I woke; and I am got to the black veil.'

'Are you, indeed? How delightful! Oh, I would not tell you what is behind the black veil for the world! Are not you wild to know?'

'Oh, yes, quite; what can it be? But do not tell me; I would not be told upon any account. I know

[1] *Milsom Street.* A famous short street in Bath devoted to shops and stores. It was built in 1764.

[2] *Coquelicot.* The color of wild poppy, that is, nearly red; or red tinged with orange.

[3] *Ribands.* This is the spelling of Miss Austen's time. The modern word *ribbon* would have appeared as oddly to her as *riband* does to us.

[4] *Udolpho. The Mysteries of Udolpho,* by Mrs. Ann Radcliffe, 1764–1823, published in 1794. A sensational romance, whose popularity was at its height at the beginning of this century, but which finds only occasional readers now.

it must be a skeleton; I am sure it is Laurentina's skeleton. Oh, I am delighted with the book! I should like to spend my whole life in reading it, I assure you; if it had not been to meet you, I would not have come away from it for all the world.'

'Dear creature! how much I am obliged to you; and when you have finished *Udolpho*, we will read the Italian together; and I have made out a list of ten or twelve more of the same kind for you.'

'Have you, indeed! How glad I am! What are they all?'

'I will read you their names directly; here they are, in my pocket-book. *Castle of Wolfenbach*, *Clermont*, *Mysterious Warnings*, *Necromancer of the Black Forest*, *Midnight Bell*, *Orphan of the Rhine*, and *Horrid Mysteries*.[1] Those will last us some time.'

'Yes, pretty well; but are they all horrid? are you sure they are all horrid?'

'Yes, quite sure; for a particular friend of mine,— a Miss Andrews, — a sweet girl, one of the sweetest creatures in the world, has read every one of them. I wish you knew Miss Andrews; you would be delighted with her. She is netting herself the sweetest cloak you can conceive. I think her as beautiful as an angel, and I am so vexed with the men for not admiring her! I scold them all amazingly about it.'

'Scold them! Do you scold them for not admiring her?'

'Yes, that I do. There is nothing I would not do for those who are really my friends. I have no notion of loving people by halves; it is not my nature. My attachments are always excessively strong. I told Captain Hunt, at one of our assemblies this winter, that

[1] 'There is this to be said for the sensational horrors which enchanted the girls of the last century, — that these horrors, when founded on the model of Mrs. Radcliffe's romances, were well principled, and free from inherent moral coarseness and license of tone.' — Miss Keddie.

if he was to tease me all night, I would not dance with him unless he would allow Miss Andrews to be as beautiful as an angel. The men think us incapable of real friendship, you know; and I am determined to show them the difference. Now, if I were to hear anybody speak slightingly of you, I should fire up in a moment: but that is not at all likely, for *you* are just the kind of girl to be a great favorite with the men.'

'Oh, dear!' cried Catherine, coloring, 'how can you say so?'

'I know you very well; you have so much animation, which is exactly what Miss Andrews wants; for I must confess there is something amazingly insipid about her. Oh, I must tell you, that just after we parted yesterday I saw a young man looking at you so earnestly; I am sure he is in love with you.' Catherine colored and disclaimed again. Isabella laughed. 'It is very true, upon my honor; but I see how it is: you are indifferent to everybody's admiration except that of one gentleman, who shall be nameless. Nay, I cannot blame you,'—speaking more seriously,—'your feelings are easily understood. Where the heart is really attached, I know very well how little one can be pleased with the attention of anybody else. Everything is so insipid, so uninteresting, that does not relate to the beloved object! I can perfectly comprehend your feelings.'

'But you should not persuade me that I think so very much about Mr. Tilney; for perhaps I may never see him again.'

'Not see him again! My dearest creature, do not talk of it! I am sure you would be miserable if you thought so.'

'No, indeed, I should not. I do not pretend to say that I was not very much pleased with him; but while I have *Udolpho* to read, I feel as if nobody could make me miserable. Oh, the dreadful black veil! My dear Isabella, I am sure there must be Laurentina's skeleton behind it.'

'It is so odd to me that you should never have read *Udolpho* before; but I suppose Mrs. Morland objects to novels.'

'No, she does not. She very often reads *Sir Charles Grandison*[1] herself; but new books do not fall in our way.'

'*Sir Charles Grandison!* That is an amazing horrid book, is it not? I remember Miss Andrews could not get through the first volume.'

'It is not like *Udolpho* at all; but yet I think it is very entertaining.'

'Do you indeed! You surprise me; I thought it had not been readable. But, my dearest Catherine, have you settled what to wear on your head to-night? I am determined, at all events, to be dressed exactly like you. The men take notice of *that* sometimes, you know.'

'But it does not signify if they do,' said Catherine, very innocently.

'Signify! O heavens! I make it a rule never to mind what they say. They are very often amazingly impertinent if you do not treat them with spirit and make them keep their distance.'

'Are they? Well, I never observed *that*. They always behave very well to me.'

'Oh, they give themselves such airs! They are the most conceited creatures in the world, and think themselves of so much importance! By the bye, though I have thought of it a hundred times, I have always forgot to ask you what is your favorite complexion in a man. Do you like them best dark or fair?'

'I hardly know. I never much thought about it. Something between both, I think: brown — not fair, and not very dark.'

'Very well, Catherine. That is exactly he. I have not forgot your description of Mr. Tilney: "a brown

[1] *The History of Sir Charles Grandison*, by Samuel Richardson (1689–1761), was published in 1754.

skin, with dark eyes, and rather dark hair." Well, my taste is different. I prefer light eyes; and as to complexion — do you know, I like a sallow better than any other. You must not betray me, if you should ever meet with one of your acquaintance answering that description.'

'Betray you! What do you mean?'

'Nay, do not distress me. I believe I have said too much. Let us drop the subject.'

Catherine, in some amazement, complied; and after remaining a few moments silent, was on the point of reverting to what interested her at that time rather more than anything else in the world, Laurentina's skeleton, when her friend prevented her by saying, 'For Heaven's sake! let us move away from this end of the room. Do you know, there are two odious young men who have been staring at me this half-hour. They really put me quite out of countenance. Let us go and look at the arrivals. They will hardly follow us there.'

Away they walked to the book; and while Isabella examined the names, it was Catherine's employment to watch the proceedings of these alarming young men.

'They are not coming this way, are they? I hope they are not so impertinent as to follow us. Pray let me know if they are coming. I am determined I will not look up.'

In a few moments Catherine, with unaffected pleasure, assured her that she need not be longer uneasy, as the gentlemen had just left the Pump-room.

'And which way are they gone?' said Isabella, turning hastily round. 'One was a very good-looking young man.'

'They went towards the churchyard.'

'Well, I am amazingly glad I have got rid of them! And now, what do you say to going to Edgar's Buildings with me and looking at my new hat? You said you should like to see it.'

Catherine readily agreed. 'Only,' she added, 'perhaps we may overtake the two young men.'

'Oh, never mind that! If we make haste, we shall pass by them presently, and I am dying to show you my hat.'

'But if we only wait a few minutes, there will be no danger of our seeing them at all.'

'I shall not pay them any such compliment, I assure you. I have no notion of treating men with such respect. *That* is the way to spoil them.'

Catherine had nothing to oppose against such reasoning; and therefore, to show the independence of Miss Thorpe, and her resolution of humbling the sex, they set off immediately as fast as they could walk in pursuit of the two young men.

[The rest of the first volume and the first five chapters of the second, give an account of the progress of Catherine's intimacy with Isabella Thorpe; James Morland's love for the latter; the attentions of John Thorpe to Catherine, her acquaintance with the Tilneys, and the invitation to visit them at Northanger Abbey. On the way, Henry Tilney amuses himself in exciting Catherine's romantic ideas concerning old abbeys, and mysteries in general, by preposterous narrations of what she may possibly find at her destination.]

NORTHANGER ABBEY.

VOLUME THE SECOND.

CHAPTER VI.

A MOMENT's glance was enough to satisfy Catherine that her apartment was very unlike the one which Henry had endeavored to alarm her by the description of. It was by no means unreasonably large, and contained neither tapestry nor velvet. The walls were papered, the floor was carpeted; the windows were neither less perfect nor more dim than those of the drawing-room below: the furniture, though not of the latest fashion, was handsome and comfortable, and the air of the room altogether far from uncheerful. Her heart instantaneously at ease on this point, she resolved to lose no time in particular examination of anything, as she greatly dreaded disobliging the General by any delay. Her habit therefore was thrown off with all possible haste, and she was preparing to unpin the linen package which the chaise-seat had conveyed for her immediate accommodation, when her eye suddenly fell on a large high chest, standing back in a deep recess on one side of the fireplace. The sight of it made her start; and forgetting everything else, she stood gazing on it in motionless wonder, while these thoughts crossed her: —

'This is strange, indeed! I did not expect such a sight as this! An immense heavy chest! What can it hold? Why should it be placed here? Pushed back

too, as if meant to be out of sight! I will look into it, — cost me what it may, I will look into it, — and directly too, by daylight. If I stay till evening my candle may go out.' She advanced and examined it closely: it was of cedar, curiously inlaid with some darker wood, and raised about a foot from the ground, on a carved stand of the same. The lock was silver, though tarnished from age; at each end were the imperfect remains of handles also of silver, broken perhaps prematurely by some strange violence; and on the centre of the lid was a mysterious cipher, in the same metal. Catherine bent over it intently, but without being able to distinguish anything with certainty. She could not, in whatever direction she took it, believe the last letter to be a *T*; and yet that it should be anything else in that house was a circumstance to raise no common degree of astonishment. If not originally theirs, by what strange events could it have fallen into the Tilney family?

Her fearful curiosity was every moment growing greater; and seizing, with trembling hands, the hasp of the lock, she resolved, at all hazards, to satisfy herself at least as to its contents. With difficulty, for something seemed to resist her efforts, she raised the lid a few inches; but at that moment a sudden knocking at the door of the room made her, starting, quit her hold, and the lid closed with alarming violence. This ill-timed intruder was Miss Tilney's maid, sent by her mistress to be of use to Miss Morland; and though Catherine immediately dismissed her, it recalled her to the sense of what she ought to be doing, and forced her, in spite of her anxious desire to penetrate this mystery, to proceed in her dressing without further delay. Her progress was not quick, for her thoughts and her eyes were still bent on the object so well calculated to interest and alarm; and though she dared not waste a moment upon a second attempt, she could not remain many paces from the chest. At length, however, hav-

ing slipped one arm into her gown, her toilette seemed so nearly finished, that the impatience of her curiosity might safely be indulged. One moment surely might be spared; and so desperate should be the exertion of her strength, that, unless secured by supernatural means, the lid in one moment should be thrown back. With this spirit she sprang forward, and her confidence did not deceive her. Her resolute effort threw back the lid, and gave to her astonished eyes the view of a white cotton counterpane, properly folded, reposing at one end of the chest in undisputed possession!

She was gazing on it with the first blush of surprise, when Miss Tilney, anxious for her friend's being ready, entered the room, and to the rising shame of having harbored for some minutes an absurd expectation, was then added the shame of being caught in so idle a search. 'That is a curious old chest, is it not?' said Miss Tilney, as Catherine hastily closed it and turned away to the glass. 'It is impossible to say how many generations it has been here. How it came to be first put in this room I know not, but I have not had it moved because I thought it might sometimes be of use in holding hats and bonnets. The worst of it is that its weight makes it difficult to open. In that corner, however, it is at least out of the way.'

Catherine had no leisure for speech, being at once blushing, tying her gown, and forming wise resolutions with the most violent despatch. Miss Tilney gently hinted her fear of being late; and in half a minute they ran downstairs together, in an alarm not wholly unfounded, for General Tilney was pacing the drawing-room, his watch in his hand, and having, on the very instant of their entering, pulled the bell with violence, ordered 'dinner to be on table *directly*.'

Catherine trembled at the emphasis with which he spoke, and sat pale and breathless, in a most humble mood, concerned for his children, and detesting old chests; and the General, recovering his politeness as

he looked at her, spent the rest of his time in scolding his daughter for so foolishly hurrying her fair friend, who was absolutely out of breath from haste, when there was not the least occasion for hurry in the world; but Catherine could not at all get over the double distress of having involved her friend in a lecture and been a great simpleton herself, till they were happily seated at the dinner-table, when the General's complacent smiles, and a good appetite of her own, restored her to peace. The dining-parlor was a noble room, suitable in its dimensions to a much larger drawing-room than the one in common use, and fitted up in a style of luxury and expense which was almost lost on the unpractised eye of Catherine, who saw little more than its spaciousness and the number of their attendants. Of the former, she spoke aloud her admiration; and the General, with a very gracious countenance, acknowledged that it was by no means an ill-sized room; and further confessed, that, though as careless on such subjects as most people, he did look upon a tolerably large eating-room as one of the necessaries of life; he supposed, however, 'that she must have been used to much better sized apartments at Mr. Allen's?'

'No, indeed,' was Catherine's honest assurance; 'Mr. Allen's dining-parlor was not more than half as large:' and she had never seen so large a room as this in her life. The General's good-humor increased. Why, as he *had* such rooms, he thought it would be simple not to make use of them; but upon his honor he believed there might be more comfort in rooms of only half their size. Mr. Allen's house, he was sure, must be exactly of the true size for rational happiness.

The evening passed without any further disturbance, and, in the occasional absence of General Tilney, with much positive cheerfulness. It was only in his presence that Catherine felt the smallest fatigue from her journey; and even then, even in moments of languor or restraint, a sense of general happiness preponderated,

and she could think of her friends in Bath without one wish of being with them.

The night was stormy; the wind had been rising at intervals the whole afternoon, and by the time the party broke up it blew and rained violently. Catherine, as she crossed the hall, listened to the tempest with sensations of awe; and when she heard it rage round a corner of the ancient building, and close with sudden fury a distant door, felt for the first time that she was really in an abbey. Yes, these were characteristic sounds; they brought to her recollection a countless variety of dreadful situations and horrid scenes which such buildings had witnessed and such storms ushered in; and most heartily did she rejoice in the happier circumstances attending her entrance within walls so solemn! *She* had nothing to dread from midnight assassins or drunken gallants. Henry had certainly been only in jest in what he had told her that morning. In a house so furnished and so guarded she could have nothing to explore or to suffer; and might go to her bedroom as securely as if it had been her own chamber at Fullerton. Thus wisely fortifying her mind, as she proceeded upstairs she was enabled, especially on perceiving that Miss Tilney slept only two doors from her, to enter her room with a tolerably stout heart; and her spirits were immediately assisted by the cheerful blaze of a wood-fire. 'How much better is this,' said she, as she walked to the fender; 'how much better to find a fire ready lit, than to have to wait shivering in the cold till all the family are in bed, as so many poor girls have been obliged to do, and then to have a faithful old servant frightening one by coming in with a fagot! How glad I am that Northanger is what it is! If it had been like some other places, I do not know that, in such a night as this, I could have answered for my courage; but now, to be sure, there is nothing to alarm one.'

She looked round the room. The window curtains seemed in motion. It could be nothing but the violence

of the wind penetrating through the divisions of the shutters; and she stepped boldly forward, carelessly humming a tune, to assure herself of its being so, peeped courageously behind each curtain, saw nothing on either low window-seat to scare her, and on placing a hand against the shutter felt the strongest conviction of the wind's force. A glance at the old chest, as she turned away from this examination, was not without its use; she scorned the causeless fears of an idle fancy, and began with the most happy indifference to prepare herself for bed. 'She should take her time; she should not hurry herself; she did not care if she were the last person up in the house. But she would not make up her fire; *that* would seem cowardly, as if she wished for the protection of light after she were in bed.' The fire therefore died away; and Catherine, having spent the best part of an hour in her arrangements, was beginning to think of stepping into bed, when, on giving a parting glance round the room, she was struck by the appearance of a high, old-fashioned black cabinet, which, though in a situation conspicuous enough, had never caught her notice before. Henry's words, his description of the ebony cabinet, which was to escape her observation at first, immediately rushed across her; and though there could be nothing really in it, there was something whimsical, it was certainly a very remarkable coincidence! She took her candle and looked closely at the cabinet. It was not absolutely ebony and gold, but it was Japan,—black and yellow Japan of the handsomest kind; and as she held her candle, the yellow had very much the effect of gold. The key was in the door, and she had a strange fancy to look into it; not, however, with the smallest expectation of finding anything, but it was so very odd, after what Henry had said. In short, she could not sleep till she had examined it. So, placing the candle with great caution on a chair, she seized the key with a very tremulous hand and tried to turn it; but it resisted her utmost strength.

Alarmed, but not discouraged, she tried it another way; a bolt flew, and she believed herself successful; but how strangely mysterious! — the door was still immovable. She paused a moment in breathless wonder. The wind roared down the chimney, the rain beat in torrents against the windows, and everything seemed to speak the awfulness of her situation. To retire to bed, however, unsatisfied on such a point, would be vain, since sleep must be impossible with the consciousness of a cabinet so mysteriously closed in her immediate vicinity. Again, therefore, she applied herself to the key, and after moving it in every possible way for some instants with the determined celerity of hope's last effort, the door suddenly yielded to her hand; her heart leaped with exultation at such a victory, and having thrown open each folding-door, the second being secured only by bolts of less wonderful construction than the lock, — though in that her eye could not discern anything unusual, — a double range of small drawers appeared in view, with some larger drawers above and below them; and in the centre a small door, closed also with a lock and key, secured in all probability a cavity of importance.

Catherine's heart beat quick, but her courage did not fail her. With a cheek flushed by hope, and an eye straining with curiosity, her fingers grasped the handle of a drawer and drew it forth. It was entirely empty. With less alarm and greater eagerness she seized a second, a third, a fourth, — each was equally empty. Not one was left unsearched, and in not one was anything found. Well read in the art of concealing a treasure, the possibility of false linings to the drawers did not escape her, and she felt round each with anxious acuteness in vain. The place in the middle alone remained unexplored; and though she had never from the first had the smallest idea of finding anything in any part of the cabinet, and was not in the least disappointed at her ill-success thus far, it would be foolish

not to examine it thoroughly while she was about it.' It was some time, however, before she could unfasten the door, the same difficulty occurring in the management of this inner lock as of the outer; but at length it did open; and not vain, as hitherto, was her search; her quick eyes directly fell on a roll of paper pushed back into the further part of the cavity, apparently for concealment, and her feelings at that moment were indescribable. Her heart fluttered, her knees trembled, and her cheeks grew pale. She seized, with an unsteady hand, the precious manuscript, for half a glance sufficed to ascertain written characters; and while she acknowledged with awful sensations this striking exemplification of what Henry had foretold, resolved instantly to peruse every line before she attempted to rest.

The dimness of the light her candle emitted made her turn to it with alarm; but there was no danger of its sudden extinction, it had yet some hours to burn; and that she might not have any greater difficulty in distinguishing the writing than what its ancient date might occasion, she hastily snuffed it. Alas! it was snuffed and extinguished in one. A lamp could not have expired with more awful effect. Catherine, for a few moments, was motionless with horror. It was done completely; not a remnant of light in the wick could give hope to the rekindling breath. Darkness impenetrable and immovable filled the room. A violent gust of wind, rising with sudden fury, added fresh horror to the moment. Catherine trembled from head to foot. In the pause which succeeded, a sound like receding footsteps and the closing of a distant door struck on her affrighted ear. Human nature could support no more. A cold sweat stood on her forehead, the manuscript fell from her hand, and groping her way to the bed, she jumped hastily in, and sought some suspension of agony by creeping far underneath the clothes. To close her eyes in sleep that night she felt must be en-

tirely out of the question. With a curiosity so justly awakened, and feelings in every way so agitated, repose must be absolutely impossible. The storm, too, abroad so dreadful! She had not been used to feel alarm from wind, but now every blast seemed fraught with awful intelligence. The manuscript so wonderfully found, so wonderfully accomplishing the morning's prediction, — how was it to be accounted for? What could it contain? to whom could it relate? by what means could it have been so long concealed? And how singularly strange that it should fall to her lot to discover it! Till she had made herself mistress of its contents, however, she could have neither repose nor comfort; and with the sun's first rays she was determined to peruse it. But many were the tedious hours which must yet intervene. She shuddered, tossed about in her bed, and envied every quiet sleeper. The storm still raged, and various were the noises, more terrific even than the wind, which struck at intervals on her startled ear. The very curtains of her bed seemed at one moment in motion, and at another the lock of her door was agitated, as if by the attempts of somebody to enter. Hollow murmurs seemed to creep along the gallery; and more than once her blood was chilled by the sound of distant moans. Hour after hour passed away; and the wearied Catherine had heard three proclaimed by all the clocks in the house, before the tempest subsided, or she unknowingly fell fast asleep.

CHAPTER VII.

THE housemaid's folding back her window-shutters at eight o'clock the next day was the sound which first roused Catherine; and she opened her eyes, wondering that they could ever have been closed on objects of cheerfulness. Her fire was already burning, and a bright morning had succeeded the tempest of the night.

Instantaneously with the consciousness of existence returned her recollection of the manuscript; and springing from the bed in the very moment of the maid's going away, she eagerly collected every scattered sheet which had burst from the roll on its falling to the ground, and flew back to enjoy the luxury of their perusal on her pillow. She now plainly saw that she must not expect a manuscript of equal length with the generality of what she had shuddered over in books; for the roll, seeming to consist entirely of small disjointed sheets, was altogether but of a trifling size, and much less than she had supposed it to be at first.

Her greedy eye glanced rapidly over a page. She started at its import. Could it be possible, or did not her senses play her false? An inventory of linen, in coarse and modern characters, seemed all that was before her! If the evidence of sight might be trusted, she held a washing-bill in her hand. She seized another sheet, and saw the same articles with little variation; a third, a fourth, and a fifth presented nothing new. Shirts, stockings, cravats, and waistcoats faced her in each. Two others, penned by the same hand, marked an expenditure scarcely more interesting, in letters, hair powder, shoe-string, and breeches-ball. And the largest sheet, which had enclosed the rest, seemed by its first cramp line, 'To poultice chestnut mare,' a farrier's bill! Such was the collection of papers (left perhaps, as she could then suppose, by the negligence of a servant in the place whence she had taken them) which had filled her with expectation and alarm, and robbed her of half her night's rest! She felt humbled to the dust. Could not the adventure of the chest have taught her wisdom? A corner of it catching her eye as she lay seemed to rise up in judgment against her. Nothing could now be clearer than the absurdity of her recent fancies. To suppose that a manuscript of many generations back could have remained undiscovered in a room such as that, so modern, so habitable; or that

she should be the first to possess the skill of unlocking a cabinet, the key of which was open to all!

How could she have so imposed on herself? Heaven forbid that Henry Tilney should ever know her folly! And it was in a great measure his own doing; for had not the cabinet appeared so exactly to agree with his description of her adventures, she should never have felt the smallest curiosity about it. This was the only comfort that occurred. Impatient to get rid of those hateful evidences of her folly, those detestable papers then scattered over the bed, she rose directly; and folding them up as nearly as possible in the same shape as before, returned them to the same spot within the cabinet, with a very hearty wish that no untoward accident might ever bring them forward again, to disgrace her even with herself.

Why the locks should have been so difficult to open, however, was still something remarkable, for she could now manage them with perfect ease. In this there was surely something mysterious, and she indulged in the flattering suggestion for half a minute, till the possibility of the door's having been at first unlocked, and of being herself its fastener, darted into her head and cost her another blush.

She got away as soon as she could from a room in which her conduct produced such unpleasant reflections, and found her way with all speed to the breakfast parlor, as it had been pointed out to her by Miss Tilney the evening before. Henry was alone in it; and his immediate hope of her having been undisturbed by the tempest, with an arch[1] reference to the character of the building they inhabited, was rather distressing. For the world would she not have her weakness suspected; and yet, unequal to an absolute falsehood, was constrained to acknowledge that the wind had kept her

[1] The use of this word in the sense of mischievous or roguish, though common enough once, is rapidly disappearing from modern literature.

awake a little. 'But we have a charming morning after it,' she added, desiring to get rid of the subject; 'and storms and sleeplessness are nothing when they are over. What beautiful hyacinths! I have just learned to love a hyacinth.'

'And how might you learn, — by accident, or argument?'

'Your sister taught me: I cannot tell how. Mrs. Allen used to take pains, year after year, to make me like them; but I never could, till I saw them the other day in Milsom Street; I am naturally indifferent about flowers.'[1]

'But now you love a hyacinth. So much the better. You have gained a new source of enjoyment, and it is well to have as many holds upon happiness as possible. Besides, a taste for flowers is always desirable in your sex, as a means of getting you out of doors, and tempting you to more frequent exercise than you would otherwise take: and though the love of a hyacinth may be rather domestic, who can tell, the sentiment once raised, but you may in time come to love a rose?'

'But I do not want any such pursuit to get me out of doors. The pleasure of walking and breathing fresh air is enough for me, and in fine weather I am out more than half my time. Mamma says I am never within.'

'At any rate, however, I am pleased that you have learned to love a hyacinth. The mere habit of learning to love is the thing; and a teachableness of disposition in a young lady is a great blessing. Has my sister a pleasant mode of instruction?'

Catherine was saved the embarrassment of attempting an answer by the entrance of the General, whose smiling compliments announced a happy state of mind, but whose gentle hints of sympathetic early rising did not advance her composure. . . .

[1] 'What a candid admission from a heroine, or from any girl! But to love flowers was not obligatory in the last century.' — Miss Keddie.

[The remainder of the tale, with the exception of the last chapter, is taken up with the details of Catherine's visit at Northanger; her sudden dismissal by General Tilney when he is told by John Thorpe that she is not an heiress, as Thorpe had previously informed him; her return to Fullerton; Isabella's jilting of James Morland in favor of Captain Tilney; Henry Tilney's refusal to forget Catherine as his father peremptorily desires him to do, and his journey to Fullerton to offer himself to her.]

CHAPTER XVI.

MR. AND MRS. MORLAND'S surprise on being applied to by Mr. Tilney for their consent to his marrying their daughter was for a few minutes considerable, it having never entered their heads to suspect an attachment on either side; but as nothing, after all, could be more natural than Catherine's being beloved, they soon learned to consider it with only the happy agitation of gratified pride, and, as far as they alone were concerned, had not a single objection to start. His pleasing manners and good sense were self-evident recommendations; and having never heard evil of him, it was not their way to suppose any evil could be told. Good-will supplying the place of experience, his character needed no attestation. 'Catherine would make a sad heedless young housekeeper, to be sure,' was her mother's foreboding remark; but quick was the consolation of there being nothing like practice.

There was but one obstacle, in short, to be mentioned; but till that one was removed, it must be impossible for them to sanction the engagement. Their tempers were mild, but their principles were steady; and while his parent so expressly forbade the connection, they could not allow themselves to encourage it. That the General should come forward to solicit the alliance, or that he should even very heartily approve it, they were not refined enough to make any parading stipulation; but the decent appearance of consent must be

yielded, and that once obtained, — and their own hearts made them trust that it could not be very long denied, — their willing approbation was instantly to follow. His *consent* was all they wished for. They were no more inclined than entitled to demand his *money*. Of a very considerable fortune his son was, by marriage settlements, eventually secure; his present income was an income of independence and comfort; and under every pecuniary view it was a match beyond the claims of their daughter.

The young people could not be surprised at a decision like this. They felt and they deplored, but they could not resent it; and they parted, endeavoring to hope that such a change in the General as each believed almost impossible might speedily take place, to unite them again in the fulness of privileged affection. Henry returned to what was now his only home, to watch over his young plantations and extend his improvements for her sake, to whose share in them he looked anxiously forward; and Catherine remained at Fullerton to cry. Whether the torments of absence were softened by a clandestine correspondence, let us not inquire. Mr. and Mrs. Morland never did: they had been too kind to exact any promise; and whenever Catherine received a letter, as at that time happened pretty often, they always looked another way.

The anxiety, which in this state of their attachment must be the portion of Henry and Catherine, and of all who loved either, as to its final event, can hardly extend, I fear, to the bosom of my readers, who will see in the telltale compression of the pages before them that we are all hastening together to perfect felicity. The means by which their early marriage was effected can be the only doubt: what probable circumstance could work upon a temper like the General's? The circumstance which chiefly availed was the marriage of his daughter with a man of fortune and consequence, which took place in the course of the summer, — an

accession of dignity that threw him into a fit of good-humor, from which he did not recover till after Eleanor had obtained his forgiveness of Henry, and his permission for him 'to be a fool if he liked it!'

The marriage of Eleanor Tilney, her removal from all the evils of such a home as Northanger had been made by Henry's banishment, to the home of her choice and the man of her choice, is an event which I expect to give general satisfaction among all her acquaintance. My own joy on the occasion is very sincere. I know no one more entitled by unpretending merit, or better prepared by habitual suffering, to receive and enjoy felicity. Her partiality for this gentleman was not of recent origin; and he had been long withheld only by inferiority of situation from addressing her. His unexpected accession to title and fortune had removed all his difficulties; and never had the General loved his daughter so well in all her hours of companionship, utility, and patient endurance, as when he first hailed her 'Your Ladyship!' Her husband was really deserving of her; independent of his peerage, his wealth, and his attachment, being to a precision the most charming young man in the world. Any further definition of his merits must be unnecessary; the most charming young man in the world is instantly before the imagination of us all. Concerning the one in question, therefore, I have only to add (aware that the rules of composition forbid the introduction of a character not connected with my fable), that this was the very gentleman whose negligent servant left behind him that collection of washing-bills, resulting from a long visit at Northanger, by which my heroine was involved in one of her most alarming adventures.

The influence of the Viscount and Viscountess in their brother's behalf was assisted by that right understanding of Mr. Morland's circumstances, which, as soon as the General would allow himself to be informed, they were qualified to give. It taught him that he had

been scarcely more misled by Thorpe's first boast of the family wealth than by his subsequent malicious overthrow of it; that in no sense of the word were they necessitous or poor, and that Catherine would have three thousand pounds. This was so material an amendment of his late expectations, that it greatly contributed to smooth the descent of his pride; and by no means without its effect was the private intelligence, which he was at some pains to procure, that the Fullerton estate, being entirely at the disposal of its present proprietor, was consequently open to every greedy speculation.

On the strength of this, the General, soon after Eleanor's marriage, permitted his son to return to Northanger, and thence made him the bearer of his consent, very courteously worded in a page full of empty professions, to Mr. Morland. The event which it authorized soon followed: Henry and Catherine were married, the bells rang, and everybody smiled; and as this took place within a twelvemonth from the first day of their meeting, it will not appear, after all the dreadful delays occasioned by the General's cruelty, that they were essentially hurt by it. To begin perfect happiness at the respective ages of twenty-six and eighteen is to do pretty well; and professing myself, moreover, convinced that the General's unjust interference, so far from being really injurious to their felicity, was perhaps rather conducive to it, by improving their knowledge of each other and adding strength to their attachment, I leave it to be settled by whomsoever it may concern, whether the tendency of this work be altogether to recommend parental tyranny or reward filial disobedience.[1]

[1] Miss Keddie calls attention to Miss Austen's 'independence of precedent, and of the popular verdict in fiction,' and thinks 'it is also a sign how true-hearted and unworldly she was herself in the main, under the class prejudices which she undoubtedly held, that she should, in the reasonableness which she so insisted upon, indicate how lightly within certain limits she valued the accidental ad-

vantages of rank and riches in comparison with mutual affection and mutual and moral affinity. To her, certainly,

> "Kind hearts are more than coronets,
> And simple faith than Norman blood!"

when she makes her heroine, whom she loves dearly, while she laughs at her from first to last, marry with all her will a simple country clergyman, while a secondary character in the story carries off the peer and charming fellow in one.'

MANSFIELD PARK.

BEGUN AT CHAWTON IN 1811; PUBLISHED IN 1814.

12

MANSFIELD PARK.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Sir Thomas Bertram: Owner of Mansfield Park in Northamptonshire. A baronet with large means and a high sense of his own importance. Well-meaning and kind-hearted in the main, but with a cold dignity of manner that is somewhat repellant.

Thomas Bertram: Eldest son of Sir Thomas. A somewhat headstrong young man inclined to extravagance and dissipation.

Edmund Bertram: Second son of Sir Thomas. A refined, clear-headed young man who expects to take orders. He is secretly beloved by his cousin Fanny Price, and is himself very much in love with Mary Crawford.

Mr. Crawford: Brother to Mrs. Grant. A wealthy, self-indulgent young man, greatly in love with Fanny Price, but being rejected by her he renews an old flirtation with Maria Bertram after she has become Mrs. Rushworth, and elopes with her.

Dr. Grant: The clergyman holding the living of Mansfield. A man in middle life, fonder of good eating than of anything else in the world.

Mr. Rushworth: Son of Mrs. Rushworth. Owner of Sotherton Court, some miles from Mansfield. A dull-witted young man with little but wealth to recommend him. He marries Maria Bertram, who does not love him.

Lieutenant Price: A naval officer living at Portsmouth. A coarse man, idle and dissipated.

Lieutenant William Price: Eldest son of Lieutenant Price. A worthy young man, to whom his sister Fanny is greatly attached.

Mr. Yates: A gay, trifling young man, who elopes with Julia Bertram.

Lady Bertram: Wife of Sir Thomas Bertram. A woman of easy, indolent habits, 'who spent her days in sitting nicely dressed on a sofa doing some long piece of needlework of little use and no beauty.'

Maria Bertram: Eldest daughter of Sir Thomas. A selfish beauty, courting admiration and flattery. In love with Henry

Crawford. She marries Rushworth for the sake of position, and afterwards leaves her home with Crawford, who soon deserts her.

Julia Bertram: Second daughter of Sir Thomas. A young woman nearly as self-willed as her sister, and quite as undisciplined. In the latter part of the novel she elopes with Mr. Yates and marries him. Later experiences render her character more subdued and tractable.

Miss Crawford: Sister to Mrs. Grant. A brilliant young woman possessed of many excellencies, but worldly, and too tolerant of defects of character. She is much in love with Edmund Bertram and he with her, but her worldliness at last extinguishes his affection for her.

Mrs. Grant: Wife of Dr. Grant. An estimable woman of whom, as her successor at the vicarage, Mrs. Norris is constantly jealous.

Mrs. Norris: Sister to Lady Bertram, and widow of a former vicar at Mansfield. A parsimonious, nagging woman, prodigal of advice and reprimand, and as active as her elder sister is indolent.

Mrs. Price: Youngest sister to Lady Bertram, and wife to Lieutenant Price. A slatternly, shiftless woman with a large family of mismanaged children.

Fanny Price: Eldest daughter of Lieutenant Price. Taken into the Bertram family when quite young and educated there, with a proper sense of her great blessings continually impressed upon her by Mrs. Norris. A girl of a timid, sensitive, self-sacrificing nature, loving her brother William and her cousin Edmund better than any other persons in the world.

Susan Price: Second daughter of Lieutenant Price. A girl of fourteen, undisciplined in character, but of excellent impulses.

Mrs. Rushworth: 'A well-meaning, civil, prosing, pompous woman, who thought nothing of consequence but as it related to her own and her son's concerns.'

The scene of the first two-thirds of the book is at Mansfield Park in Northamptonshire, and during a portion of the remainder at Portsmouth. The time covered by the actual progress of events is between nine and ten years, the greater part of the narrative, however, being devoted to the happenings of the last two years.

MANSFIELD PARK.

VOLUME THE FIRST.

CHAPTER I.

About thirty years ago, Miss Maria Ward of Huntingdon, with only seven thousand pounds, had the good luck to captivate Sir Thomas Bertram, of Mansfield Park, in the county of Northampton, and to be thereby raised to the rank of a baronet's lady, with all the comforts and consequences of a handsome house and large income. All Huntingdón exclaimed on the greatness of the match; and her uncle, the lawyer, himself, allowed her to be at least three thousand pounds short of any equitable claim to it. She had two sisters to be benefited by her elevation; and such of their acquaintance as thought Miss Ward and Miss Frances quite as handsome as Miss Maria, did not scruple to predict their marrying with almost equal advantage. But there certainly are not so many men of large fortune in the world as there are pretty women to deserve them. Miss Ward, at the end of half-a-dozen years, found herself obliged to be attached to the Rev. Mr. Norris, a friend of her brother-in-law, with scarcely any private fortune, and Miss Frances fared yet worse. Miss Ward's match, indeed, when it came to the point, was not contemptible, Sir Thomas being happily able to give his friend an income in the living of Mansfield; and Mr. and Mrs. Norris began their career of conjugal felicity with very

little less than a thousand a year. But Miss Frances married, in the common phrase, to disoblige her family, and by fixing on a Lieutenant of Marines, without education, fortune, or connections, did it very thoroughly. She could hardly have made a more untoward choice. Sir Thomas Bertram had interest, which, from principle as well as pride, from a general wish of doing right, and a desire of seeing all that were connected with him in situations of respectability, he would have been glad to exert for the advantage of Lady Bertram's sister: but her husband's profession was such as no interest could reach; and before he had time to devise any other method of assisting them, an absolute breach between the sisters had taken place. It was the natural result of the conduct of each party, and such as a very imprudent marriage almost always produces. To save herself from useless remonstrance, Mrs. Price never wrote to her family on the subject till actually married. Lady Bertram, who was a woman of very tranquil feelings, and a temper remarkably easy and indolent, would have contented herself with merely giving up her sister, and thinking no more of the matter: but Mrs. Norris had a spirit of activity, which could not be satisfied till she had written a long and angry letter to Fanny, to point out the folly of her conduct, and threaten her with all its possible ill-consequences. Mrs. Price, in her turn, was injured and angry; and an answer, which comprehended each sister in its bitterness, and bestowed such very disrespectful reflections on the pride of Sir Thomas, as Mrs. Norris could not possibly keep to herself, put an end to all intercourse between them for a considerable period.

Their homes were so distant, and the circles in which they moved so distinct, as almost to preclude the means of ever hearing of each other's existence during the eleven following years, or at least to make it very wonderful to Sir Thomas that Mrs. Norris should ever have it in her power to tell them, as she now and then did in

an angry voice, that Fanny had got another child. By the end of eleven years, however, Mrs. Price could no longer afford to cherish pride or resentment, or to lose one connection that might possibly assist her. A large and still increasing family, a husband disabled for active service, but not the less equal to company and good liquor, and a very small income to supply their wants, made her eager to regain the friends she had so carelessly sacrificed; and she addressed Lady Bertram in a letter which spoke so much contrition and despondence, such a superfluity of children, and such a want of almost everything else, as could not but dispose them all to a reconciliation. She was preparing for her ninth lying-in; and after bewailing the circumstance and imploring their countenance as sponsors to the expected child, she could not conceal how important she felt they might be to the future maintenance of the eight already in being. Her eldest was a boy of ten years old, a fine spirited fellow, who longed to be out in the world; but what could she do? Was there any chance of his being hereafter useful to Sir Thomas in the concerns of his West Indian property? No situation would be beneath him. Or what did Sir Thomas think of Woolwich; or how could a boy be sent out to the East?

The letter was not unproductive. It re-established peace and kindness. Sir Thomas sent friendly advice and professions, Lady Bertram despatched money and baby-linen, and Mrs. Norris wrote the letters.

Such were its immediate effects; and within a twelvemonth a more important advantage to Mrs. Price resulted from it. Mrs. Norris was often observing to the others, that she could not get her poor sister and her family out of her head, and that, much as they had all done for her, she seemed to be wanting to do more; and at length she could not but own it to be her wish that poor Mrs. Price should be entirely relieved from the charge and expense of one child out of her great number.

'What if they were among them to undertake the care of her eldest daughter, a girl now nine years old, of an age to require more attention than her poor mother could possibly give? The trouble and expense of it to them would be nothing, compared with the benevolence of the action.'

Lady Bertram agreed with her instantly. 'I think we cannot do better,' said she; 'let us send for the child.'

Sir Thomas could not give so instantaneous and unqualified a consent. He debated and hesitated. It was a serious charge; a girl so brought up must be adequately provided for, or there would be cruelty instead of kindness in taking her from her family. He thought of his own four children — of his two sons — of cousins in love, etc.; but no sooner had he deliberately begun to state his objections, than Mrs. Norris interrupted him with a reply to them all, whether stated or not.

'My dear Sir Thomas, I perfectly comprehend you, and do justice to the generosity and delicacy of your notions, which indeed are quite of a piece with your general conduct; and I entirely agree with you in the main as to the propriety of doing everything one could by way of providing for a child one had in a manner taken into one's own hands; and I am sure I should be the last person in the world to withhold my mite upon such an occasion. Having no children of my own, whom should I look to in any little matter I may ever have to bestow, but the children of my sisters? And I am sure Mr. Norris is too just, — but you know I am a woman of few words and professions. Do not let us be frightened from a good deed by trifles. Give a girl an education, and introduce her properly into the world, and ten to one but she has the means of settling well, without farther expense to anybody. A niece of ours, Sir Thomas, I may say, or at least of *yours*, would not grow up in this neighborhood without many

advantages. I don't say she would be so handsome as her cousins. I dare say she would not; but she would be introduced into the society of this country under such very favorable circumstances as, in all human probability, would get her a creditable establishment. You are thinking of your sons; but do not you know that of all things upon earth *that* is the least likely to happen, brought up, as they would be, always together like brothers and sisters? It is morally impossible. I never knew an instance of it. It is, in fact, the only sure way of providing against the connection. Suppose her a pretty girl, and seen by Tom or Edmund for the first time seven years hence, and I dare say there would be mischief. The very idea of her having been suffered to grow up at a distance from us all in poverty and neglect, would be enough to make either of the dear, sweet-tempered boys in love with her. But breed her up with them from this time, and suppose her even to have the beauty of an angel, and she will never be more to either than a sister.'

'There is a great deal of truth in what you say,' replied Sir Thomas, 'and far be it from me to throw any fanciful impediment in the way of a plan which would be so consistent with the relative situations of each. I only meant to observe that it ought not to be lightly engaged in, and that to make it really serviceable to Mrs. Price, and creditable to ourselves, we must secure to the child, or consider ourselves engaged to secure to her hereafter, as circumstances may arise, the provision of a gentlewoman, if no such establishment should offer as you are so sanguine in expecting.'

'I thoroughly understand you,' cried Mrs. Norris; 'you are everything that is generous and considerate, and I am sure we shall never disagree on this point. Whatever I can do, as you well know, I am always ready enough to do for the good of those I love; and though I could never feel for this little girl the hun-

dredth part of the regard I bear your own dear children, nor consider her in any respect so much my own, I should hate myself if I were capable of neglecting her. Is she not a sister's child; and could I bear to see her want, while I had a bit of bread to give her? My dear Sir Thomas, with all my faults I have a warm heart; and, poor as I am, would rather deny myself the necessaries of life than do an ungenerous thing. So, if you are not against it, I will write to my poor sister to-morrow, and make the proposal; and as soon as matters are settled, *I* will engage to get the child to Mansfield; *you* shall have no trouble about it. My own trouble, you know, I never regard. I will send Nanny to London on purpose, and she may have a bed at her cousin the saddler's, and the child be appointed to meet her there. They may easily get her from Portsmouth to town by the coach, under the care of any creditable person that may chance to be going. I dare say there is always some reputable tradesman's wife or other going up.'

Except to the attack on Nanny's cousin, Sir Thomas no longer made any objection; and a more respectable, though less economical rendezvous being accordingly substituted, everything was considered as settled, and the pleasures of so benevolent a scheme were already enjoyed. The division of gratifying sensations ought not, in strict justice, to have been equal; for Sir Thomas was fully resolved to be the real and consistent patron of the selected child, and Mrs. Norris had not the least intention of being at any expense whatever in her maintenance. As far as walking, talking, and contriving reached, she was thoroughly benevolent, and nobody knew better how to dictate liberality to others; but her love of money was equal to her love of directing, and she knew quite as well how to save her own as to spend that of her friends. Having married on a narrower income than she had been used to look forward to, she had from the first fancied a strict line of econo-

my necessary; and what was begun as a matter of prudence soon grew into a matter of choice, as an object of that needful solicitude which there were no children to supply. Had there been a family to provide for, Mrs. Norris might never have saved her money; but having no care of that kind, there was nothing to impede her frugality, or lessen the comfort of making a yearly addition to an income which they had never lived up to. Under this infatuating principle, counteracted by no real affection for her sister, it was impossible for her to aim at more than the credit of projecting and arranging so expensive a charity; though perhaps she might so little know herself as to walk home to the Parsonage, after this conversation, in the happy belief of being the most liberal-minded sister and aunt in the world.

When the subject was brought forward again, her views were more fully explained; and in reply to Lady Bertram's calm inquiry of 'Where shall the child come to first, sister, to you or to us?' Sir Thomas heard, with some surprise, that it would be totally out of Mrs. Norris's power to take any share in the personal charge of her. He had been considering her as a particularly welcome addition at the Parsonage, as a desirable companion to an aunt who had no children of her own; but he found himself wholly mistaken. Mrs. Norris was sorry to say that the little girl's staying with them, at least as things then were, was quite out of the question. Poor Mr. Norris's indifferent state of health made it an impossibility: he could no more bear the noise of a child than he could fly. If, indeed, he should ever get well of his gouty complaints, it would be a different matter: she should then be glad to take her turn, and think nothing of the inconvenience; but just now poor Mr. Norris took up every moment of her time, and the very mention of such a thing she was sure would distract him.

'Then she had better come to us?' said Lady Ber-

tram, with the utmost composure. After a short pause, Sir Thomas added with dignity, 'Yes, let her home be in this house. We will endeavor to do our duty by her, and she will at least have the advantage of companions of her own age, and of a regular instructress.'

'Very true,' cried Mrs. Norris, 'which are both very important considerations; and it will be just the same to Miss Lee whether she has three girls to teach, or only two, — there can be no difference. I only wish I could be more useful; but you see I do all in my power. I am not one of those that spare their own trouble; and Nanny shall fetch her, however it may put me to inconvenience to have my chief counsellor away for three days. I suppose, sister, you will put the child in the little white attic, near the old nurseries. It will be much the best place for her, so near Miss Lee, and not far from the girls, and close by the housemaids, who could either of them help to dress her, you know, and take care of her clothes; for I suppose you would not think it fair to expect Ellis to wait on her as well as the others. Indeed, I do not see that you could possibly place her anywhere else.'

Lady Bertram made no opposition.

'I hope she will prove a well-disposed girl,' continued Mrs. Norris, 'and be sensible of her uncommon good fortune in having such friends.'

'Should her disposition be really bad,' said Sir Thomas, 'we must not, for our own children's sake, continue her in the family; but there is no reason to expect so great an evil. We shall probably see much to wish altered, and must prepare ourselves for gross ignorance, some meanness of opinions, and very distressing vulgarity of manner; but these are not incurable faults; nor, I trust, can they be dangerous for her associates. Had my daughters been *younger* than herself, I should have considered the introduction of such a companion as a matter of very serious moment; but as it is, I hope there

can be nothing to fear for *them*, and everything to hope for *her*, from the association.'

'That is exactly what I think,' cried Mrs. Norris, 'and what I was saying to my husband this morning. "It will be an education for the child," said I, "only being with her cousins; if Miss Lee taught her nothing, she would learn to be good and clever from *them*."'

'I hope she will not tease my poor pug,' said Lady Bertram; 'I have but just got Julia to leave it alone.'

'There will be some difficulty in our way, Mrs. Norris,' observed Sir Thomas, 'as to the distinction proper to be made between the girls as they grow up; how to preserve in the minds of my *daughters* the consciousness of what they are, without making them think too lowly of their cousin; and how, without depressing her spirits too far, to make her remember that she is not a *Miss Bertram*. I should wish to see them very good friends, and would on no account authorize in my girls the smallest degree of arrogance towards their relation; but still they cannot be equals. Their rank, fortune, rights, and expectations will always be different. It is a point of great delicacy, and you must assist us in our endeavors to choose exactly the right line of conduct.'

Mrs Norris was quite at his service; and though she perfectly agreed with him as to its being a most difficult thing, encouraged him to hope that between them it would be easily managed.

It will be readily believed that Mrs. Norris did not write to her sister in vain. Mrs. Price seemed rather surprised that a girl should be fixed on when she had so many fine boys, but accepted the offer most thankfully, assuring them of her daughter's being a very well-disposed, good-humored girl, and trusting they would never have cause to throw her off. She spoke of her farther as somewhat delicate and puny, but was sanguine in the

hope of her being materially better for change of air. Poor woman! she probably thought change of air might agree with many of her children.

[Fanny Price accordingly enters the Bertram family, and volumes first and second are devoted to the account of her growing up at Mansfield Park; Sir Thomas's absence at Antigua for a year or more; the attempt by the Bertrams and their friends to enact a play at Mansfield Park, which is frustrated by the return of Sir Thomas, who disapproves of the affair; the infatuation of the Bertram sisters for Henry Crawford; the marriage of Maria to Mr. Rushworth; the love of Edmund Bertram for Miss Crawford; the attentions of Henry Crawford to Fanny, and his proposal to her at the close of the second volume.]

MANSFIELD PARK.

VOLUME THE THIRD.

CHAPTER I.

FANNY had by no means forgotten Mr. Crawford when she awoke the next morning; but she remembered the purport of her note, and was not less sanguine, as to its effect, than she had been the night before. If Mr. Crawford would but go away! That was what she most earnestly desired; — go and take his sister with him, as he was to do, and as he returned to Mansfield on purpose to do. And why it was not done already she could not devise, for Miss Crawford certainly wanted no delay. Fanny had hoped, in the course of his yesterday's visit, to hear the day named; but he had only spoken of their journey as what would take place ere long.

Having so satisfactorily settled the conviction her note would convey, she could not but be astonished to see Mr. Crawford, as she accidentally did, coming up to the house again, and at an hour as early as the day before. His coming might have nothing to do with her, but she must avoid seeing him if possible; and being then in her way upstairs, she resolved there to remain during the whole of his visit, unless actually sent for; and as Mrs. Norris was still in the house, there seemed little danger of her being wanted.

She sat some time in a good deal of agitation, listening, trembling, and fearing to be sent for every moment; but

as no footsteps approached the east room, she grew gradually composed, could sit down, and be able to employ herself, and able to hope that Mr. Crawford had come, and would go, without her being obliged to know anything of the matter.

Nearly half an hour had passed, and she was growing very comfortable, when suddenly the sound of a step in regular approach was heard, — a heavy step, an unusual step in that part of the house; it was her uncle's; she knew it as well at his voice; she had trembled at it as often, and began to tremble again, at the idea of his coming up to speak to her, whatever might be the subject. It was indeed Sir Thomas who opened the door and asked if she were there, and if he might come in. The terror of his former occasional visits to that room seemed all renewed, and she felt as if he were going to examine her again in French and English.

She was all attention, however, in placing a chair for him, and trying to appear honored; and in her agitation had quite overlooked the deficiencies of her apartment, till he, stopping short as he entered, said, with much surprise, 'Why have you no fire to-day?'

There was snow on the ground, and she was sitting in a shawl. She hesitated.

'I am not cold, sir; I never sit here long at this time of year.'

'But you have a fire in general?'

'No, sir.'

'How comes this about; here must be some mistake. I understood that you had the use of this room by way of making you perfectly comfortable. In your bedchamber I know you *cannot* have a fire. Here is some great misapprehension which must be rectified. It is highly unfit for you to sit — be it only half an hour a day—without a fire. You are not strong. You are chilly. You aunt cannot be aware of this.'

Fanny would rather have been silent; but being obliged to speak, she could not forbear, in justice to the

aunt she loved best. from saying something in which the words ' my aunt Norris,' were distinguishable.

' I understand,' cried her uncle, recollecting himself, and not wanting to hear more, — ' I understand. Your aunt Norris has always been an advocate, and very judiciously, for young people's being brought up without unnecessary indulgences; but there should be moderation in everything. She is also very hardy herself, which of course will influence her in her opinion of the wants of others. And on another account, too, I can perfectly comprehend. I know what her sentiments have always been. The principle was good in itself, but it may have been, and I believe *has been*, carried too far in your case. I am aware that there has been sometimes, in some points, a misplaced distinction; but I think too well of you, Fanny, to suppose you will ever harbor resentment on that account. You have an understanding which will prevent you from receiving things only in part, and judging partially by the event. You will take in the whole of the past, you will consider times, persons, and probabilities, and you will feel that they were not least your friends who were educating and preparing you for that mediocrity of condition which seemed to be your lot. Though their caution may prove eventually unnecessary, it was kindly meant; and of this you may be assured, that every advantage of affluence will be doubled by the little privations and restrictions that may have been imposed. I am sure you will not disappoint my opinion of you by failing at any time to treat your aunt Norris with the respect and attention that are due to her. But enough of this. Sit down, my dear. I must speak to you for a few minutes, but I will not detain you long. '

Fanny obeyed, with eyes cast down and color rising. After a moment's pause, Sir Thomas, trying to suppress a smile, went on, —

' You are not aware, perhaps, that I have had a visitor this morning. I had not been long in my own

room after breakfast when Mr. Crawford was shown in. His errand you may probably conjecture.'

Fanny's color grew deeper and deeper; and her uncle, perceiving that she was embarrassed to a degree that made either speaking or looking up quite impossible, turned away his own eyes, and without any further pause proceeded in his account of Mr. Crawford's visit.

Mr. Crawford's business had been to declare himself the lover of Fanny, make decided proposals for her, and entreat the sanction of the uncle, who seemed to stand in the place of her parents; and he had done it all so well, so openly, so liberally, so properly, that Sir Thomas, feeling, moreover, his own replies and his own remarks to have been very much to the purpose, was exceedingly happy to give the particulars of their conversation; and, little aware of what was passing in his niece's mind, conceived that by such details he must be gratifying her far more than himself. He talked, therefore, for several minutes without Fanny's daring to interrupt him. She had hardly even attained the wish to do it. Her mind was in too much confusion. She had changed her position, and with her eyes fixed intently on one of the windows was listening to her uncle in the utmost perturbation and dismay. For a moment he ceased, but she had barely become conscious of it when, rising from his chair, he said, 'And now, Fanny, having performed one part of my commission, and shown you everything placed on a basis the most assured and satisfactory, I may execute the remainder by prevailing on you to accompany me downstairs, where, though I cannot but presume on having been no unacceptable companion myself, I must submit to your finding one still better worth listening to. Mr. Crawford, as you have perhaps foreseen, is yet in the house. He is in my room, and hoping to see you there.'

There was a look, a start, an exclamation on hearing

this, which astonished Sir Thomas; but what was his increase of astonishment on hearing her exclaim, 'Oh no, sir, I cannot, indeed I cannot go down to him. Mr. Crawford ought to know — he must know that — I told him enough yesterday to convince him. He spoke to me on this subject yesterday, and I told him without disguise that it was very disagreeable to me, and quite out of my power to return his good opinion.'

'I do not catch your meaning,' said Sir Thomas, sitting down again. 'Out of your power to return his good opinion! What is all this? I know he spoke to you yesterday, and (as far as I understand) received as much encouragement to proceed as a well-judging young woman could permit herself to give. I was very much pleased with what I collected to have been your behavior on the occasion; it showed a discretion highly to be commended. But now, when he has made his overtures so properly and honorably — what are your scruples *now*?'

'You are mistaken, sir,' cried Fanny, forced by the anxiety of the moment even to tell her uncle that he was wrong, — 'you are quite mistaken. How could Mr. Crawford say such a thing? I gave him no encouragement yesterday. On the contrary, I told him — I cannot recollect my exact words — but I am sure I told him that I would not listen to him, that it was very unpleasant to me in every respect, and that I begged him never to talk to me in that manner again. I am sure I said as much as that, and more; and I should have said still more, if I had been quite certain of his meaning anything seriously; but I did not like to be — I could not bear to be — imputing more than might be intended. I thought it might all pass for nothing with *him*.'

She could say no more; her breath was almost gone.

'Am I to understand,' said Sir Thomas, after a few moments' silence, 'that you mean to *refuse* Mr. Crawford?'

'Yes, sir.'

'Refuse him?'

'Yes, sir.'

'Refuse Mr. Crawford! Upon what plea? For what reason?'

'I — I cannot like him, sir, well enough to marry him.'

'This is very strange!' said Sir Thomas, in a voice of calm displeasure. 'There is something in this which my comprehension does not reach. Here is a young man wishing to pay his addresses to you, with everything to recommend him; not merely situation in life, fortune, and character, but with more than common agreeableness, with address and conversation pleasing to everybody. And he is not an acquaintance of to-day; you have now known him some time. His sister, moreover, is your intimate friend; and he has been doing *that* for your brother which I should suppose would have been almost sufficient recommendation for you, had there been no other. It is very uncertain when my interest might have got William on. He has done it already.'

'Yes,' said Fanny, in a faint voice, and looking down with fresh shame; and she did feel almost ashamed of herself, after such a picture as her uncle had drawn, for not liking Mr. Crawford.

'You must have been aware,' continued Sir Thomas presently, — 'you must have been some time aware of a particularity in Mr. Crawford's manners to you. This cannot have taken you by surprise. You must have observed his attentions; and though you always received them very properly (I have no accusation to make on that head), I never perceived them to be unpleasant to you. I am half inclined to think, Fanny, that you do not quite know your own feelings.'

'Oh yes, sir, indeed I do. His attentions were always — what I did not like.'

Sir Thomas looked at her with deeper surprise.

'This is beyond me,' said he. 'This requires explanation. Young as you are, and having seen scarcely any one, it is hardly possible that your affections —'

He paused and eyed her fixedly. He saw her lips formed into a *no*, though the sound was inarticulate, but her face was like scarlet. That however, in so modest a girl, might be very compatible with innocence; and choosing at least to appear satisfied, he quickly added, 'No, no, I know *that* is quite out of the question — quite impossible. Well, there is nothing more to be said.'

And for a few moments he did say nothing. He was deep in thought. His niece was deep in thought likewise, trying to harden and prepare herself against farther questioning. She would rather die than own the truth, and she hoped by a little reflection to fortify herself beyond betraying it.

'Independently of the interest which Mr. Crawford's *choice* seemed to justify,' said Sir Thomas, beginning again, and very composedly, 'his wishing to marry at all so early is recommendatory to me. I am an advocate for early marriages where there are means in proportion, and would have every young man, with a sufficient income, settle as soon after four-and-twenty as he can. This is so much my opinion, that I am sorry to think how little likely my own eldest son, your cousin, Mr. Bertram, is to marry early; but at present, as far as I can judge, matrimony makes no part of his plans or thoughts. I wish he were more likely to fix.' Here was a glance at Fanny. 'Edmund I consider, from his disposition and habits, as much more likely to marry early than his brother. *He* indeed, I have lately thought, has seen the woman he could love, which, I am convinced, my eldest son has not. Am I right? Do you agree with me, my dear?'

'Yes, sir.'

It was gently, but it was calmly said, and Sir Thomas was easy on the score of the cousins. But the removal

of his alarm did his niece no service; as her unaccountableness was confirmed, his displeasure increased; and getting up and walking about the room, with a frown, which Fanny could picture to herself, though she dared not lift up her eyes, he shortly afterwards, and in a voice of authority, said, 'Have you any reason, child, to think ill of Mr. Crawford's temper?'

'No, sir.'

She longed to add, 'But of his principles I have;' but her heart sunk under the appalling prospect of discussion, explanation, and probably non-conviction. Her ill opinion of him was founded chiefly on observations, which, for her cousins' sake, she could scarcely dare mention to their father. Maria and Julia, and especially Maria, were so closely implicated in Mr. Crawford's misconduct, that she could not give his character, such as she believed it, without betraying them. She had hoped that, to a man like her uncle, so discerning, so honorable, so good, the simple acknowledgment of settled *dislike* on her side would have been sufficient. To her infinite grief she found it was not.

Sir Thomas came towards the table where she sat in trembling wretchedness, and with a good deal of cold sternness said, 'It is of no use, I perceive, to talk to you. We had better put an end to this most mortifying conference. Mr. Crawford must not be kept longer waiting. I will therefore only add, as thinking it my duty to mark my opinion of your conduct, that you have disappointed every expectation I had formed, and proved yourself of a character the very reverse of what I had supposed. For I *had*, Fanny, as I think my behavior must have shown, formed a very favorable opinion of you from the period of my return to England. I had thought you peculiarly free from wilfulness of temper, self-conceit, and every tendency to that independence of spirit which prevails so much in modern days, even in young women, and which in young women is offensive and disgusting beyond all common

offence. But you have now shown me that you can be wilful and perverse, that you can and will decide for yourself, without any consideration or deference for those who have surely some right to guide you, — without even asking their advice. You have shown yourself very, very different from anything that I had imagined. The advantage or disadvantage of your family, of your parents, your brothers and sisters, never seems to have had a moment's share in your thoughts on this occasion. How *they* might be benefited, how *they* must rejoice in such an establishment for you, is nothing to *you*. You think only of yourself; and because you do not feel for Mr. Crawford exactly what a young, heated fancy imagines to be necessary for happiness, you resolve to refuse him at once, without wishing even for a little time to consider of it, — a little more time for cool consideration, and for really examining your own inclinations, — and are, in a wild fit of folly, throwing away from you such an opportunity of being settled in life, eligibly, honorably, nobly settled, as will probably never occur to you again. Here is a young man of sense, of character, of temper, of manners, and of fortune, exceedingly attached to you, and seeking your hand in the most handsome and disinterested way; and let me tell you, Fanny, that you may live eighteen years longer in the world without being addressed by a man of half Mr. Crawford's estate, or a tenth part of his merits. Gladly would I have bestowed either of my own daughters on him. Maria is nobly married; but had Mr. Crawford sought Julia's hand, I should have given it to him with superior and more heartfelt satisfaction than I gave Maria's to Mr. Rushworth.' After half a moment's pause, — 'And I should have been very much surprised had either of my daughters, on receiving a proposal of marriage at any time, which might carry with it only *half* the eligibility of *this*, immediately and peremptorily, and without paying my opinion or my regard the compliment of any consultation, put a

decided negative on it. I should have been much surprised, and much hurt, by such a proceeding. I should have thought it a gross violation of duty and respect. *You* are not to be judged by the same rule. You do not owe me the duty of a child. But, Fanny, if your heart can acquit you of *ingratitude* —'

He ceased. Fanny was by this time crying so bitterly, that, angry as he was, he would not press that article farther. Her heart was almost broken by such a picture of what she appeared to him; by such accusations, so heavy, so multiplied, so rising in dreadful gradation! Self-willed, obstinate, selfish, and ungrateful. He thought her all this. She had deceived his expectations; she had lost his good opinion. What was to become of her?

'I am very sorry,' said she inarticulately, through her tears, 'I am very sorry, indeed.'

'Sorry! yes, I hope you are sorry; and you will probably have reason to be long sorry for this day's transactions.'

'If it were possible for me to do otherwise,' said she, with another strong effort, — 'but I am so perfectly convinced that I could never make him happy, and that I should be miserable myself.'

Another burst of tears; but in spite of that burst, and in spite of that great black word, *miserable*, which served to introduce it, Sir Thomas began to think a little relenting, a little change of inclination, might have something to do with it; and to augur favorably from the personal entreaty of the young man himself. He knew her to be very timid, and exceedingly nervous; and thought it not improbable that her mind might be in such a state, as a little time, a little pressing, a little patience, and a little impatience, a judicious mixture of all on the lover's side, might work their usual effect on. If the gentleman would but persevere, if he had but love enough to persevere, — Sir Thomas began to have hopes; and these reflections having passed across his

mind and cheered it, 'Well,' said he, in a tone of becoming gravity, but of less anger, — 'well, child, dry up your tears. There is no use in these tears; they can do no good. You must now come downstairs with me. Mr. Crawford has been kept waiting too long already. You must give him your own answer; we cannot expect him to be satisfied with less; and you only can explain to him the grounds of that misconception of your sentiments, which, unfortunately for himself, he certainly has imbibed. I am totally unequal to it.'

But Fanny showed such reluctance, such misery, at the idea of going down to him, that Sir Thomas, after a little consideration, judged it better to indulge her. His hopes from both gentleman and lady suffered a small depression in consequence; but when he looked at his niece, and saw the state of feature and complexion which her crying had brought her into, he thought there might be as much lost as gained by an immediate interview. With a few words, therefore, of no particular meaning, he walked off by himself, leaving his poor niece to sit and cry over what had passed with very wretched feelings.

Her mind was all disorder. The past, present, future, everything was terrible. But her uncle's anger gave her the severest pain of all. Selfish and ungrateful! to have appeared so to him! She was miserable forever. She had no one to take her part, to counsel, or speak for her. Her only friend[1] was absent. He might have softened his father; but all, perhaps all, would think her selfish and ungrateful. She might have to endure the reproach again and again; she might hear it, or see it, or know it to exist forever in every connection about her. She could not but feel some resentment against Mr. Crawford; yet if he really loved her, and were unhappy too, — it was all wretchedness together.

[1] Edmund Bertram, who, from the coming of his cousin Fanny to Mansfield Park, had been her steadfast friend and adviser.

In about a quarter of an hour her uncle returned; she was almost ready to faint at the sight of him. He spoke calmly, however, without austerity, without reproach, and she revived a little. There was comfort, too, in his words, as well as his manner, for he began with, 'Mr. Crawford is gone; he has just left me. I need not repeat what has passed. I do not want to add to anything you may now be feeling, by an account of what he has felt. Suffice it, that he has behaved in the most gentlemanlike and generous manner; and has confirmed me in a most favorable opinion of his understanding, heart, and temper. Upon my representation of what you were suffering, he immediately, and with the greatest delicacy, ceased to urge to see you for the present.'

Here Fanny, who had looked up, looked down again.

'Of course,' continued her uncle, 'it cannot be supposed but that he should request to speak with you alone, be it only for five minutes; a request too natural, a claim too just to be denied. But there is no time fixed; perhaps to-morrow, or whenever your spirits are composed enough. For the present you have only to tranquillize yourself. Check those tears; they do but exhaust you. If, as I am willing to suppose, you wish to show me any observance, you will not give way to these emotions, but endeavor to reason yourself into a stronger frame of mind. I advise you to go out; the air will do you good. Go out for an hour on the gravel; you will have the shrubbery to yourself, and will be the better for air and exercise. And, Fanny [turning back again for a moment], I shall make no mention below of what has passed; I shall not even tell your aunt Bertram; there is no occasion for spreading the disappointment; say nothing about it yourself.'

This was an order to be most joyfully obeyed; this was an act of kindness which Fanny felt at her heart. To be spared from her aunt Norris's interminable reproaches! — he left her in a glow of gratitude. Any-

thing might be bearable rather than such reproaches. Even to see Mr. Crawford would be less overpowering.

She walked out directly, as her uncle recommended, and followed his advice throughout, as far as she could; did check her tears, did earnestly try to compose her spirits and strengthen her mind. She wished to prove to him that she did desire his comfort, and sought to regain his favor; and he had given her another strong motive for exertion in keeping the whole affair from the knowledge of her aunts. Not to excite suspicion by her look or manner was now an object worth attaining; and she felt equal to almost anything that might save her from her aunt Norris.

She was struck, quite struck, when, on returning from her walk, and going into the east room again, the first thing which caught her eye was a fire lighted and burning. A fire! it seemed too much; just at that time to be giving her such an indulgence, was exciting even painful gratitude. She wondered that Sir Thomas could have leisure to think of such a trifle again; but she soon found, from the voluntary information of the housemaid, who came in to attend it, that so it was to be every day. Sir Thomas had given orders for it.

'I must be a brute indeed, if I can be really ungrateful!' said she in soliloquy. 'Heaven defend me from being ungrateful!'

She saw nothing more of her uncle, nor of her aunt Norris, till they met at dinner. Her uncle's behavior to her was then as nearly as possible what it had been before; she was sure he did not mean there should be any change, and that it was only her own conscience that could fancy any. But her aunt was soon quarrelling with her; and when she found how much and how unpleasantly her having only walked out without her aunt's knowledge could be dwelt on, she felt all the reason she had to bless the kindness which saved her from the same spirit of reproach, exerted on a more momentous subject.

'If I had known you were going out I should have got you just to go as far as my house with some orders for Nanny,' said she, 'which I have since, to my very great inconvenience, been obliged to go and carry myself. I could very ill spare the time, and you might have saved me the trouble, if you would only have been so good as to let us know you were going out. It would have made no difference to you, I suppose, whether you had walked in the shrubbery or gone to my house.'

'I recommended the shrubbery to Fanny as the driest place,' said Sir Thomas.

'Oh,' said Mrs. Norris, with a moment's check, 'that was very kind of you, Sir Thomas; but you do not know how dry the path is to my house. Fanny would have had quite as good a walk there, I assure you; with the advantage of being of some use and obliging her aunt: it is all her fault. If she would but have let us know she was going out — but there is a something about Fanny, I have often observed it before — she likes to go her own way to work; she does not like to be dictated to; she takes her own independent walk whenever she can; she certainly has a little spirit of secrecy, and independence, and nonsense, about her, which I would advise her to get the better of.'

As a general reflection on Fanny, Sir Thomas thought nothing could be more unjust, though he had been so lately expressing the same sentiments himself, and he tried to turn the conversation; tried repeatedly before he could succeed; for Mrs. Norris had not discernment enough to perceive, either now or at any other time, to what degree he thought well of his niece, or how very far he was from wishing to have his own children's merits set off by the depreciation of hers. She was talking *at* Fanny and resenting this private walk half through the dinner.

It was over, however, at last; and the evening set in with more composure to Fanny, and more cheerfulness of spirits than she could have hoped for after so stormy

a morning; but she trusted, in the first place, that she had done right, that her judgment had not misled her; for the purity of her intentions she could answer; and she was willing to hope, secondly, that her uncle's displeasure was abating, and would abate farther as he considered the matter with more impartiality, and felt, as a good man must feel, how wretched and how unpardonable, how hopeless and how wicked it was, to marry without affection.

When the meeting with which she was threatened for the morrow was past, she could not but flatter herself that the subject would be finally concluded, and Mr. Crawford once gone from Mansfield, that everything would soon be as if no such subject had existed. She would not, could not believe that Mr. Crawford's affection for her could distress him long; his mind was not of that sort. London would soon bring its cure. In London he would soon learn to wonder at his infatuation, and be thankful for the right reason in her which had saved him from its evil consequences.

While Fanny's mind was engaged in these sort of hopes, her uncle was soon after tea called out of the room; an occurrence too common to strike her, and she thought nothing of it till the butler reappeared ten minutes afterwards, and advancing decidedly towards herself, said, 'Sir Thomas wants to speak with you, ma'am, in his own room.' Then it occurred to her what might be going on; a suspicion rushed over her mind which drove the color from her cheeks; but instantly rising, she was preparing to obey, when Mrs. Norris called out, 'Stay, stay, Fanny! what are you about? where are you going? don't be in such a hurry. Depend upon it, it is not you that are wanted; depend upon it, it is me [looking at the butler]; but you are so very eager to put yourself forward. What should Sir Thomas want you for? It is me, Baddeley, you mean; I am coming this moment. You mean me, Baddeley, I am sure; Sir Thomas wants me, not Miss Price.'

But Baddeley was stout. 'No, ma'am, it is Miss Price; I am certain of its being Miss Price.' And there was a half smile with the words, which meant, 'I do not think *you* would answer the purpose at all.'

Mrs. Norris, much discontented, was obliged to compose herself to work again; and Fanny, walking off in agitating consciousness, found herself, as she anticipated, in another minute alone with Mr. Crawford.

[In the course of the next six chapters Henry Crawford continues to hope for Fanny's change of disposition towards him, and in this is encouraged both by Sir Thomas and Edmund; he procures a naval promotion for Fanny's brother William, and soon after his departure for London Sir Thomas sends Fanny on a visit to her parents at Portsmouth, in the hope that change of scene may induce a change of sentiment towards her admirer.]

CHAPTER VIII.

Could Sir Thomas have seen all his niece's feelings, when she wrote her first letter to her aunt, he would not have despaired; for though a good night's rest, a pleasant morning, the hope of soon seeing William again, and the comparatively quiet state of the house, from Tom and Charles being gone to school, Sam on some project of his own, and her father on his usual lounges, enabled her to express herself cheerfully on the subject of home, there were still to her own perfect consciousness many drawbacks suppressed. Could he have seen only half that she felt before the end of a week, he would have thought Mr. Crawford sure of her, and been delighted with his own sagacity.

Before the week ended it was all disappointment. In the first place William was gone. The *Thrush* had had her orders, the wind had changed, and he was sailed within four days from their reaching Portsmouth; and during those days she had seen him only twice, in a short and hurried way, when he had come ashore on

duty. There had been no free conversation, no walk on the ramparts, no visit to the dockyard, no acquaintance with the *Thrush*, — nothing of all that they had planned and depended on. Everything in that quarter failed her, except William's affection. His last thought on leaving home was for her. He stepped back again to the door to say, 'Take care of Fanny, mother. She is tender, and not used to rough it like the rest of us. I charge you, take care of Fanny.'

William was gone; and the home he had left her in was — Fanny could not conceal it from herself — in almost every respect the very reverse of what she could have wished. It was the abode of noise, disorder, and impropriety. Nobody was in the right place, nothing was done as it ought to be. She could not respect her parents as she had hoped. On her father her confidence had not been sanguine; but he was more negligent of his family, his habits were worse, and his manners coarser than she had been prepared for. He did not want abilities; but he had no curiosity, and no information beyond his profession; he read only the newspaper and the navy-list; he talked only of the dockyard, the harbor, Spithead, and the Motherbank; he swore and he drank, he was dirty and gross. She had never been able to recall anything approaching to tenderness in his former treatment of herself. There had remained only a general impression of roughness and loudness; and now he scarcely ever noticed her, but to make her the object of a coarse joke.

Her disappointment in her mother was greater; *there* she had hoped much, and found almost nothing. Every flattering scheme of being of consequence to her soon fell to the ground. Mrs. Price was not unkind; but instead of gaining on her affection and confidence, and becoming more and more dear, her daughter never met with greater kindness from her than on the first day of her arrival. The instinct of nature was soon satisfied, and Mrs. Price's attachment had no other source. Her

heart and her time were already quite full; she had neither leisure nor affection to bestow on Fanny. Her daughters never had been much to her. She was fond of her sons, especially of William, but Betsey was the first of her girls whom she had ever much regarded. To her she was most injudiciously indulgent. William was her pride, Betsey her darling; and John, Richard, Sam, Tom, and Charles occupied all the rest of her maternal solicitude, alternately her worries and her comforts. These shared her heart; her time was given chiefly to her house and her servants. Her days were spent in a kind of slow bustle, — always busy without getting on, always behindhand and lamenting it, without altering her ways; wishing to be an economist without contrivance or regularity; dissatisfied with her servants without skill to make them better; and whether helping, or reprimanding, or indulging them, without any power of engaging their respect.

Of her two sisters, Mrs. Price very much more resembled Lady Bertram than Mrs. Norris. She was a manager by necessity, without any of Mrs. Norris's inclination for it, or any of her activity. Her disposition was naturally easy and indolent, like Lady Bertram's; and a situation of similar affluence and do-nothingness would have been much more suited to her capacity than the exertions and self-denials of the one which her imprudent marriage had placed her in. She might have made just as good a woman of consequence as Lady Bertram; but Mrs. Norris would have been a more respectable mother of nine children on a small income.[1]

[1] Miss Austen was too excellent an artist to draw for us a disagreeable character that should be wholly without relieving qualities; and intensely disagreeable as Mrs. Norris is, she still retains a slight claim upon our respect, her vices, as they may be called, springing from exaggerated virtues. One of Miss Austen's literary successors, Mr. Anthony Trollope, understood this principle almost as well. It is impossible to like his famous creation, Mrs. Proudie, but one is forced at times to respect her.

Much of all this Fanny could not but be sensible of. She might scruple to make use of the words, but she must and did feel that her mother was a partial, ill-judging parent, — a dawdle, a slattern, — who neither taught nor restrained her children, whose house was the scene of mismanagement and discomfort from beginning to end, and who had no talent, no conversation, no affection towards herself, no curiosity to know her better, no desire of her friendship, and no inclination for her company that could lessen her sense of such feelings.

Fanny was very anxious to be useful, and not to appear above her home, or in any way disqualified or disinclined, by her foreign education, from contributing her help to its comforts, and therefore set about working for Sam immediately; and by working early and late, with perseverance and great despatch, did so much, that the boy was shipped off at last with more than half his linen ready. She had great pleasure in feeling her usefulness, but could not conceive how they would have managed without her.

Sam, loud and overbearing as he was, she rather regretted when he went, for he was clever and intelligent, and glad to be employed in any errand in the town; and though spurning the remonstrances of Susan, given as they were, though very reasonable in themselves, with ill-timed and powerless warmth, was beginning to be influenced by Fanny's services and gentle persuasions; and she found that the best of the three younger ones was gone in him, Tom and Charles being at least as many years as they were his juniors distant from that age of feeling and reason which might suggest the expediency of making friends, and of endeavoring to be less disagreeable. Their sister soon despaired of making the smallest impression on *them;* they were quite untamable by any means of address which she had spirits or time to attempt. Every afternoon brought a return of their riotous games all over the

house, and she very early learned to sigh at the approach of Saturday's constant half holiday.

Betsey, too, a spoilt child, trained up to think the alphabet her greatest enemy, left to be with the servants at her pleasure, and then encouraged to report any evil of them, she was almost as ready to despair of being able to love or assist; and of Susan's temper she had many doubts. Her continual disagreement with her mother, her rash squabbles with Tom and Charles, and petulance with Betsey, were at least so distressing to Fanny, that though admitting they were by no means without provocation, she feared the disposition that could push them to such length must be far from amiable, and from affording any repose to herself.

Such was the home which was to put Mansfield out of her head, and teach her to think of her cousin Edmund with moderate feelings. On the contrary, she could think of nothing but Mansfield, its beloved inmates, its happy ways. Everything where she now was, was in full contrast to it. The elegance, propriety, regularity, harmony, and perhaps above all the peace and tranquillity of Mansfield, were brought to her remembrance every hour of the day by the prevalence of everything opposite to them *here*.

The living in incessant noise was, to a frame and temper delicate and nervous like Fanny's, an evil which no superadded elegance or harmony could have entirely atoned for. It was the greatest misery of all. At Mansfield no sounds of contention, no raised voice, no abrupt bursts, no tread of violence was ever heard; all proceeded in a regular course of cheerful orderliness, everybody had their due importance, everybody's feelings were consulted. If tenderness could be ever supposed wanting, good sense and good breeding supplied its place; and as to the little irritations sometimes introduced by aunt Norris, they were short, they were trifling, they were as a drop of water to the ocean, compared with the ceaseless tumult of her present

abode. Here everybody was noisy, every voice was loud (excepting perhaps her mother's, which resembled the soft monotony of Lady Bertram's, only worn into fretfulness). Whatever was wanted was hallooed for, and the servants hallooed out their excuses from the kitchen. The doors were in constant banging, the stairs were never at rest, nothing was done without a clatter, nobody sat still, and nobody could command attention when they spoke.

In a review of the two houses, as they appeared to her before the end of the week, Fanny was tempted to apply to them Dr. Johnson's celebrated judgment as to matrimony and celibacy, and say, that though Mansfield Park might have some pains, Portsmouth could have no pleasures.

[Mr. Crawford calls upon Fanny at Portsmouth, but going once more to London he visits Maria Rushworth, and finally induces her to desert her husband for him; Julia at about the same time elopes with a Mr. Yates; Miss Crawford on the occasion of her brother's wrong doing shows such lack of right feeling in the matter as to completely alienate Edmund's affections from her, and Fanny returns to Mansfield Park.]

CHAPTER XVI.

Let other pens dwell on guilt and misery. I quit such odious subjects as soon as I can, impatient to restore everybody, not greatly in fault themselves, to tolerable comfort, and to have done with all the rest.

My Fanny,[1] indeed, at this very time, I have the satisfaction of knowing, must have been happy in spite of everything. She must have been a happy creature

[1] 'Probably of all the author's heroines, Fanny Price, if not the most charming, is the greatest triumph of genius, for one can hardly conceive two creatures moulded by circumstances more unlike than the life of Jane Austen in her youth, and that of the timid, shrinking, sickly Fanny Price.' — Miss Keddie.

in spite of all that she felt, or thought she felt, for the distress of those around her. She had sources of delight that must force their way. She was returned to Mansfield Park, she was useful, she was beloved; she was safe from Mr. Crawford; and when Sir Thomas came back she had every proof that could be given in his then melancholy state of spirits, of his perfect approbation and increased regard; and happy as all this must make her. she would still have been happy without any of it, for Edmund was no longer the dupe of Miss Crawford.

It is true that Edmund was very far from happy himself. He was suffering from disappointment and regret, grieving over what was, and wishing for what could never be. She knew it was so, and was sorry; but it was with a sorrow so founded on satisfaction, so tending to ease, and so much in harmony with every dearest sensation, that there are few who might not have been glad to exchange their greatest gayety for it.

Sir Thomas, poor Sir Thomas, a parent, and conscious of errors in his own conduct as a parent, was the longest to suffer. He felt that he ought not to have allowed the marriage; that his daughter's sentiments had been sufficiently known to him to render him culpable in authorizing it; that in so doing he had sacrificed the right to the expedient, and been governed by motives of selfishness and worldly wisdom. These were reflections that required some time to soften; but time will do almost everything; and though little comfort arose on Mrs. Rushworth's side for the misery she had occasioned, comfort was to be found greater than he had supposed, in his other children. Julia's match became a less desperate business than he had considered it at first. She was humble, and wishing to be forgiven; and Mr. Yates, desirous of being really received into the family, was disposed to look up to him and be guided. He was not very solid; but there was a hope of his becoming less trifling,— of his being at least tolerably domestic

and quiet; and, at any rate, there was comfort in finding his estate rather more, and his debts much less, than he had feared, and in being consulted and treated as the friend best worth attending to. There was comfort also in Tom, who gradually regained his health, without regaining the thoughtlessness and selfishness of his previous habits. He was the better forever for his illness. He had suffered, and he had learned to think, two advantages that he had never known before; and the self-reproach arising from the deplorable event in Wimpole Street,[1] to which he felt himself accessory by all the dangerous intimacy of his unjustifiable theatre, made an impression on his mind which, at the age of six-and-twenty, with no want of sense or good companions, was durable in its happy effects. He became what he ought to be, — useful to his father, steady and quiet, and not living merely for himself.

Here was comfort indeed! and quite as soon as Sir Thomas could place dependence on such sources of good, Edmund was contributing to his father's ease by improvement in the only point in which *he* had given him pain before, — improvement in his spirits. After wandering about and sitting under trees with Fanny all the summer evenings, he had so well talked his mind into submission as to be very tolerably cheerful again.

These were the circumstances and the hopes which gradually brought their alleviation to Sir Thomas, deadening his sense of what was lost, and in part reconciling him to himself; though the anguish arising from the conviction of his own errors in the education of his daughters was never to be entirely done away.

Too late he became aware how unfavorable to the character of any young people must be the totally opposite treatment which Maria and Julia had been always experiencing at home, where the excessive indulgence and flattery of their aunt had been continually contrasted

[1] The home of the Rushworths in London.

with his own severity. He saw how ill he had judged, in expecting to counteract what was wrong in Mrs. Norris by its reverse in himself, clearly saw that he had but increased the evil, by teaching them to repress their spirits in his presence, as to make their real disposition unknown to him, and sending them for all their indulgences to a person who had been able to attach them only by the blindness of her affection and the excess of her praise.

Here had been grievous mismanagement; but, bad as it was, he gradually grew to feel that it had not been the most direful mistake in his plan of education. Something must have been wanting *within*, or time would have worn away much of its ill effect. He feared that principle, active principle, had been wanting; that they had never been properly taught to govern their inclinations and tempers, by that sense of duty which can alone suffice. They had been instructed theoretically in their religion, but never required to bring it into daily practice. To be distinguished for elegance and accomplishments — the authorized object of their youth — could have had no useful influence that way, no moral effect on the mind. He had meant them to be good, but his cares had been directed to the understanding and manners, not the disposition; and of the necessity of self-denial and humility he feared they had never heard from any lips that could profit them.

Bitterly did he deplore a deficiency which now he could scarcely comprehend to have been possible. Wretchedly did he feel that with all the cost and care of an anxious and expensive education, he had brought up his daughters without their understanding their first duties, or his being acquainted with their character and temper.

The high spirit and strong passions of Mrs. Rushworth especially were made known to him only in their sad result. She was not to be prevailed on to leave Mr. Crawford. She hoped to marry him, and they continued

together till she was obliged to be convinced that such hope was vain, and till the disappointment and wretchedness arising from the conviction rendered her temper so bad, and her feelings for him so like hatred, as to make them for a while each other's punishment, and then induce a voluntary separation.

She had lived with him to be reproached as the ruin of all his happiness in Fanny, and carried away no better consolation in leaving him than that she *had* divided them. What can exceed the misery of such a mind in such a situation!

Mr. Rushworth had no difficulty in procuring a divorce; and so ended a marriage contracted under such circumstances as to make any better end, the effect of good luck, not to be reckoned on. She had despised him, and loved another; and he had been very much aware that it was so. The indignities of stupidity, and the disappointments of selfish passion, can excite little pity. His punishment followed his conduct, as did a deeper punishment the deeper guilt of his wife. *He* was released from the engagement to be mortified and unhappy, till some other pretty girl could attract him into matrimony again, and he might set forward on a second, and it is to be hoped more prosperous trial of the state — if duped, to be duped at least with good-humor and good luck; while *she* must withdraw with infinitely stronger feelings to a retirement and reproach which could allow no second spring of hope or character.

Where she could be placed, became a subject of most melancholy and momentous consultation. Mrs. Norris, whose attachment seemed to augment with the demerits of her niece, would have had her received at home and countenanced by them all. Sir Thomas would not hear of it; and Mrs. Norris's anger against Fanny was so much the greater, from considering *her* residence there as the motive. She persisted in placing his scruples to *her* account, though Sir Thomas very solemnly assured her, that had there been no young woman in question,

had there been no young person of either sex belonging to him, to be endangered by the society or hurt by the character of Mrs. Rushworth, he would never have offered so great an insult to the neighborhood as to expect it to notice her. As a daughter — he hoped a penitent one — she should be protected by him, and secured in every comfort, and supported by every encouragement to do right, which their relative situations admitted; but farther than *that* he would not go. Maria had destroyed her own character, and he would not, by a vain attempt to restore what never could be restored, be affording his sanction to vice, or, in seeking to lessen its disgrace, be anywise accessory to introducing such misery in another man's family as he had known himself.

It ended in Mrs. Norris's resolving to quit Mansfield and devote herself to her unfortunate Maria, and in an establishment being formed for them in another country, — remote and private, where, shut up together with little society, on one side no affection, on the other no judgment, it may be reasonably supposed that their tempers became their mutual punishment. Mrs. Norris's removal from Mansfield was the great supplementary comfort of Sir Thomas's life. His opinion of her had been sinking from the day of his return from Antigua: in every transaction together from that period, in their daily intercourse, in business, or in chat, she had been regularly losing ground in his esteem, and convincing him that either time had done her much dis-service, or that he had considerably over-rated her sense, and wonderfully borne with her manners before. He had felt her as an hourly evil, which was so much the worse, as there seemed no chance of its ceasing but with life; she seemed a part of himself that must be borne forever. To be relieved from her, therefore, was so great a felicity, that had she not left bitter remembrances behind her, there might have been danger of his learning almost to approve the evil which produced such a good.

She was regretted by no one at Mansfield. She had never been able to attach even those she loved best; and since Mrs. Rushworth's elopement her temper had been in a state of such irritation as to make her everywhere tormenting. Not even Fanny had tears for aunt Norris, — not even when she was gone forever.

That Julia escaped better than Maria was owing in some measure to a favorable difference of disposition and circumstance, but in a greater to her having been less the darling of that very aunt, less flattered and less spoilt. Her beauty and acquirements had held but a second place. She had been always used to think herself a little inferior to Maria. Her temper was naturally the easiest of the two; her feelings, though quick, were more controllable; and education had not given her so very hurtful a degree of self-consequence.

She had submitted the best to the disappointment in Henry Crawford. After the first bitterness of the conviction of being slighted was over, she had been tolerably soon in a fair way of not thinking of him again; and when the acquaintance was renewed in town, and Mr. Rushworth's house became Crawford's object, she had had the merit of withdrawing herself from it, and of choosing that time to pay a visit to her other friends, in order to secure herself from being again too much attracted. This had been her motive in going to her cousins. Mr. Yates's convenience had had nothing to do with it. She had been allowing his attentions some time, but with very little idea of ever accepting him; and had not her sister's conduct burst forth as it did, and her increased dread of her father and of home, on that event — imagining its certain consequence to herself would be greater severity and restraint — made her hastily resolve on avoiding such immediate horrors at all risks, it is probable that Mr. Yates would never have succeeded. She had not eloped with any worse feelings than those of selfish alarm. It had appeared to her

the only thing to be done. Maria's guilt had induced Julia's folly.

Henry Crawford, ruined by early independence and bad domestic example, indulged in the freaks of a cold-blooded vanity a little too long. Once it had, by an opening undesigned and unmerited, led him into the way of happiness. Could he have been satisfied with the conquest of one amiable woman's affections, could he have found sufficient exultation in overcoming the reluctance, in working himself into the esteem and tenderness of Fanny Price, there would have been every probability of success and felicity for him. His affection had already done something. Her influence over him had already given him some influence over her. Would he have deserved more, there can be no doubt that more would have been obtained; especially when that marriage had taken place, which would have given him the assistance of her conscience in subduing her first inclination, and brought them very often together. Would he have persevered, and uprightly, Fanny must have been his reward — and a reward very voluntarily bestowed — within a reasonable period from Edmund's marrying Mary. Had he done as he intended, and as he knew he ought, by going down to Everingham after his return from Portsmouth, he might have been deciding his own happy destiny. But he was pressed to stay for Mrs. Fraser's party: his staying was made of flattering consequence, and he was to meet Mrs. Rushworth there. Curiosity and vanity were both engaged, and the temptation of immediate pleasure was too strong for a mind unused to make any sacrifice to right: he resolved to defer his Norfolk journey, resolved that writing should answer the purpose of it, or that its purpose was unimportant — and stayed. He saw Mrs. Rushworth, was received by her with a coldness which ought to have been repulsive, and have established apparent indifference between them forever; but he was mortified, he could not bear to be thrown off by the woman whose

smiles had been so wholly at his command; he must exert himself to subdue so proud a display of resentment; it was anger on Fanny's account: he must get the better of it, and make Mrs. Rushworth Maria Bertram again in her treatment of himself.

In this spirit he began the attack; and by animated perseverance had soon re-established the sort of familiar intercourse — of gallantry — of flirtation which bounded his views; but in triumphing over the discretion, which, though beginning in anger, might have saved them both, he had put himself in the power of feelings on her side, more strong than he had supposed. She loved him: there was no withdrawing attentions avowedly dear to her. He was entangled by his own vanity, with as little excuse of love as possible, and without the smallest inconstancy of mind towards her cousin. To keep Fanny and the Bertrams from a knowledge of what was passing became his first object. Secrecy could not have been more desirable for Mrs. Rushworth's credit than he felt it for his own. When he returned from Richmond, he would have been glad to see Mrs. Rushworth no more. All that followed was the result of her imprudence; and he went off with her at last, because he could not help it, regretting Fanny even at the moment, but regretting her infinitely more when all the bustle of the intrigue was over, and a very few months had taught him, by the force of contrast, to place a yet higher value on the sweetness of her temper, the purity of her mind, and the excellence of her principles.

That punishment, the public punishment of disgrace, should in a just measure attend *his* share of the offence, is, we know, not one of the barriers which society gives to virtue. In this world the penalty is less equal than could be wished; but without presuming to look forward to a juster appointment hereafter, we may fairly consider a man of sense, like Henry Crawford, to be providing for himself no small portion of vexation and regret — vexation that must rise sometimes to self-

reproach, and regret to wretchedness — in having so requited hospitality, so injured family peace, so forfeited his best, most estimable, and endeared acquaintance, and so lost the woman whom he had rationally as well as passionately loved.

After what had passed to wound and alienate the two families, the continuance of the Bertrams and Grants in such close neighborhood would have been most distressing; but the absence of the latter, for some months purposely lengthened, ended very fortunately in the necessity, or at least the practicability, of a permanent removal. Dr. Grant, through an interest on which he had almost ceased to form hopes, succeeded to a stall in Westminster, which, as affording an occasion for leaving Mansfield, an excuse for residence in London, and an increase of income to answer the expenses of the change, was highly acceptable to those who went and those who stayed.

Mrs. Grant, with a temper to love and be loved, must have gone with some regret from the scenes and people she had been used to; but the same happiness of disposition must in any place and any society, secure her a great deal to enjoy, and she had again a home to offer Mary; and Mary had had enough of her own friends, enough of vanity, ambition, love, and disappointment in the course of the last half-year, to be in need of the true kindness of her sister's heart and the rational tranquillity of her ways. They lived together; and when Dr. Grant had brought on apoplexy and death by three great institutionary dinners in one week, they still lived together; for Mary, though perfectly resolved against ever attaching herself to a younger brother again, was long in finding among the dashing representatives or idle heir apparents who were at the command of her beauty and her £20,000 any one who could satisfy the better taste she had acquired at Mansfield, whose character and manners could authorize a hope of the domestic happiness she had there

learned to estimate, or put Edmund Bertram sufficiently out of her head.

Edmund had greatly the advantage of her in this respect. He had not to wait and wish, with vacant affections, for an object worthy to succeed her in them. Scarcely had he done regretting Mary Crawford, and observing to Fanny how impossible it was that he should ever meet with such another woman, before it began to strike him whether a very different kind of woman might not do just as well — or a great deal better; whether Fanny herself were not growing as dear, as important to him in all her smiles and all her ways, as Mary Crawford had ever been; and whether it might not be a possible, a hopeful undertaking to persuade her that her warm and sisterly regard for him would be foundation enough for wedded love.

I purposely abstain from dates on this occasion, that every one may be at liberty to fix their own, aware that the cure of unconquerable passions, and the transfer of unchanging attachments, must vary much as to time in different people. I only entreat everybody to believe that exactly at the time when it was quite natural that it should be so, and not a week earlier, Edmund did cease to care about Miss Crawford, and became as anxious to marry Fanny as Fanny herself could desire.

With such a regard for her, indeed, as his had long been, — a regard founded on the most endearing claims of innocence and helplessness, and completed by every recommendation of growing worth, — what could be more natural than the change? Loving, guiding, protecting her, as he had been doing ever since her being ten years old, her mind in so great a degree formed by his care, and her comfort depending on his kindness, an object to him of such close and peculiar interest, dearer by all his own importance with her than any one else at Mansfield, what was there now to add but that he should learn to prefer soft light eyes to sparkling dark

ones? And being always with her, and always talking confidentially, and his feelings exactly in that favorable state which a recent disappointment gives, those soft light eyes could not be very long in obtaining the pre-eminence.

Having once set out, and felt that he had done so, on this road to happiness, there was nothing on the side of prudence to stop him or make his progress slow; no doubts of her deserving, no fears from opposition of taste, no need of drawing new hopes of happiness from dissimilarity of temper. Her mind, disposition, opinions, and habits wanted no half concealment, no self-deception on the present, no reliance on future improvement. Even in the midst of his late infatuation he had acknowledged Fanny's mental superiority. What must be his sense of it now, therefore? She was of course only too good for him; but as nobody minds having what is too good for them, he was very steadily earnest in the pursuit of the blessing, and it was impossible that encouragement from her should be long wanting. Timid, anxious, doubting as she was, it was still impossible that such tenderness as hers should not, at times, hold out the strongest hope of success, though it remained for a later period to tell him the whole delightful and astonishing truth. His happiness in knowing himself to have been so long the beloved of such a heart must have been great enough to warrant any strength of language in which he could clothe it to her or to himself; it must have been a delightful happiness. But there was happiness elsewhere which no description can reach. Let no one presume to give the feelings of a young woman on receiving the assurance of that affection of which she has scarcely allowed herself to entertain a hope.

Their own inclinations ascertained, there were no difficulties behind, no drawback of poverty or parent. It was a match which Sir Thomas's wishes had even

forestalled. Sick of ambitious and mercenary connections, prizing more and more the sterling good of principle and temper, and chiefly anxious to bind by the strongest securities all that remained to him of domestic felicity, he had pondered with genuine satisfaction on the more than possibility of the two young friends finding their mutual consolation in each other for all that had occurred of disappointment to either; and the joyful consent which met Edmund's application, the high sense of having realized a great acquisition in the promise of Fanny for a daughter, formed just such a contrast with his early opinion on the subject when the poor little girl's coming had been first agitated, as time is forever producing between the plans and decisions of mortals, for their own instruction and their neighbors' entertainment.

Fanny was indeed the daughter that he wanted. His charitable kindness had been rearing a prime comfort for himself. His liberality had a rich repayment, and the general goodness of his intentions by her deserved it. He might have made her childhood happier; but it had been an error of judgment only which had given him the appearance of harshness and deprived him of her early love; and now, on really knowing each other, their mutual attachment became very strong. After settling her at Thornton Lacey with every kind attention to her comfort, the object of almost every day was to see her there, or to get her away from it.

Selfishly dear as she had long been to Lady Bertram, she could not be parted with willingly by *her*. No happiness of son or niece could make her wish the marriage. But it was possible to part with her, because Susan remained to supply her place. Susan became the stationary niece — delighted to be so! — and equally well adapted for it by a readiness of mind and an inclination for usefulness, as Fanny had been by sweetness of temper and strong feelings of gratitude. Susan

could never be spared, — first as a comfort to Fanny, then as an auxiliary, and last as her substitute, she was established at Mansfield with every appearance of equal permanency. Her more fearless disposition and happier nerves made everything easy to her there. With quickness in understanding the tempers of those she had to deal with, and no natural timidity to restrain any consequent wishes, she was soon welcome, and useful to all; and after Fanny's removal succeeded so naturally to her influence over the hourly comfort of her aunt, as gradually to become perhaps the most beloved of the two. In *her* usefulness, in Fanny's excellence, in William's continued good conduct and rising fame, and in the general well-doing and success of the other members of the family, all assisting to advance each other, and doing credit to his countenance and aid, Sir Thomas saw repeated and forever repeated reason to rejoice in what he had done for them all, and acknowledge the advantages of early hardship and discipline, and the consciousness of being born to struggle and endure.

With so much true merit and true love, and no want of fortune or friends, the happiness of the married cousins must appear as secure as earthly happiness can be. Equally formed for domestic life, and attached to country pleasure, their home was the home of affection and comfort; and to complete the picture of good, the acquisition of Mansfield living by the death of Dr. Grant occurred just after they had been married long enough to begin to want an increase of income, and feel their distance from the paternal abode an inconvenience.

On that event they removed to Mansfield; and the parsonage there, which, under each of its two former owners, Fanny had never been able to approach but with some painful sensation of restraint or alarm, soon grew as dear to her heart and as thoroughly perfect in

her eyes as everything else within the view and patronage of Mansfield Park had long been.[1]

[1] In George Meredith's wonderful but terrible picture of a life which a false system of education has nearly rendered a failure, *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel*, we have a more realistic, a more vigorous portrayal of the results of a worldly or distorted system of training than Miss Austen has given us in the account of the Crawfords and the Bertram sisters. But there are fewer side-lights of gentleness and goodness thrown upon the portrait in the work of the later artist than those Miss Austen affords. Meredith's narrative lacks artistic proportion, while Miss Austen's never does. Sin is just as surely sin in the pages of one as in those of the other, but with this difference: Meredith leaves his readers with a feeling of gloom and distrust of human nature because of the fall of his hero; but the author of *Mansfield Park*, with far less of actual experience of life but greater intuitive insight into it than he, while abating in no degree our horror at the sin, does not allow it to darken the entire mental or spiritual horizon, and obscure our perception of virtues which yet remain in the world.

EMMA.

WRITTEN AT CHAWTON IN 1814-15; PUBLISHED DECEMBER 16, 1815.

EMMA.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Rev. Mr. Elton: Vicar of Highbury. A vain young clergyman, supposed by Emma Woodhouse to be in love with Harriet Smith. He proposes, however, to Miss Woodhouse, and on being rejected soon consoles himself by marrying a wealthy young woman from Bristol as vain as he.

Frank Churchill: Son to Mr. Weston, but early adopted by his mother's family, whose name he takes. Secretly engaged to Jane Fairfax, whom he eventually marries.

George Knightley Proprietor of Donwell Abbey, near Highbury. A sensible, cultivated man of thirty-eight, and a family friend of the Woodhouses. He becomes aware of his own feelings towards Emma when he supposes her to be attracted by Frank Churchill.

John Knightley: A London lawyer, and the younger brother of Mr. Knightley. A well-meaning but rather unsocial person, married to Mr. Woodhouse's oldest daughter, Isabella.

Mr. Weston: A country gentleman living at Randalls, near Highbury, who has married at the outset of the story Miss Taylor, for many years governess at the Woodhouses'. A man of social tastes and affectionate disposition.

Mr. Woodhouse: Owner of Hartfield, an estate at Highbury. An elderly man of timid disposition and invalid habits, 'fond of everybody that he was used to, and hating to part with them; hating change of every kind.'

Mrs. Cole: Wife of a wealthy tradesman in Highbury, 'friendly, liberal, and unpretending.'

Mrs. Elton: Wife of Rev. Mr. Elton. A vain and underbred woman, always solicitous of attention.

Mrs. Bates: Widow of a former vicar of Highbury, 'a very old lady, almost past everything but tea and quadrille.'

Miss Bates: Daughter to Mrs. Bates. 'A happy woman, and a woman whom no one named without good-will.' 'A great talker upon little matters.'

Jane Fairfax: Granddaughter to Mrs. Bates. A refined, intelligent girl, who has passed most of her life in the family of a friend of her father's.

Harriet Smith: A young woman of doubtful birth and antecedents, with not much but a pretty face and affectionate disposition to recommend her, who is chosen by Emma as an intimate friend. She is in love with Robert Martin, a farmer, whom she refuses in deference to the wishes of Emma, who successively imagines Mr. Elton, Mr. Churchill, and Mr. Knightley, to be in love with her *protégé*.

Isabella Knightley: Wife of John Knightley, and oldest daughter of Mr. Woodhouse. An amiable young mother, with no very striking characteristics.

Mrs. Weston: Wife of Mr. Weston. A mild-mannered, sensible woman, greatly beloved by every one.

Emma Woodhouse: Youngest daughter of Mr. Woodhouse. A young woman of twenty-one, well-intentioned in general, but with an undue estimate of her own abilities and judgment, which is perpetually leading her into mistakes.

The scene of the novel is continuously at Highbury and its immediate vicinity, a large village about sixteen miles from London, and the time occupied in its development is about thirteen months.

EMMA.

CHAPTER I.

EMMA WOODHOUSE, handsome, clever, and rich, with a comfortable home and happy disposition, seemed to unite some of the best blessings of existence, and had lived nearly twenty-one years in the world with very little to distress or vex her.

She was the youngest of the two daughters of a most affectionate, indulgent father, and had, in consequence of her sister's marriage, been mistress of his house from a very early period. Her mother had died too long ago for her to have more than an indistinct remembrance of her caresses, and her place had been supplied by an excellent woman as governess, who had fallen little short of a mother in affection.

Sixteen years had Miss Taylor been in Mr. Woodhouse's family, less as a governess than a friend, very fond of both daughters, but particularly of Emma. Between *them* it was more the intimacy of sisters. Even before Miss Taylor had ceased to hold the nominal office of governess, the mildness of her temper had hardly allowed her to impose any restraint; and the shadow of authority being now long passed away, they had been living together as friend and friend, very mutually attached, and Emma doing just what she liked, highly esteeming Miss Taylor's judgment, but directed chiefly by her own.

The real evils, indeed, of Emma's situation were the power of having rather too much her own way, and a disposition to think a little too well of herself; these were the disadvantages which threatened alloy to her many enjoyments. The danger, however, was at present so unperceived, that they did not by any means rank as misfortunes with her.

Sorrow came, — a gentle sorrow, — but not at all in the shape of any disagreeable consciousness. Miss Taylor married. It was Miss Taylor's loss which first brought grief. It was on the wedding-day of this beloved friend that Emma first sat in mournful thought of any continuance. The wedding over and the bride-people gone, her father and herself were left to dine together, with no prospect of a third to cheer a long evening. Her father composed himself to sleep after dinner, as usual, and she had then only to sit and think of what she had lost.

The event had every promise of happiness for her friend. Mr. Weston was a man of unexceptionable character, easy fortune, suitable age, and pleasant manners; and there was some satisfaction in considering with what self-denying, generous friendship she had always wished and promoted the match; but it was a black morning's work for her. The want of Miss Taylor would be felt every hour of every day. She recalled her past kindness, — the kindness, the affection of sixteen years, — how she had taught and how she had played with her from five years old, — how she had devoted all her powers to attach and amuse her in health, — and how nursed her through the various illnesses of childhood. A large debt of gratitude was owing here; but the intercourse of the last seven years, the equal footing and perfect unreserve which had soon followed Isabella's marriage on their being left to each other, was yet a dearer, tenderer recollection. She had been a friend and companion such as few possessed: intelligent, well-informed, useful, gentle, know-

ing all the ways of the family, interested in all its concerns, and peculiarly interested in herself, in every pleasure, every scheme of hers, — one to whom she could speak every thought as it arose, and who had such an affection for her as could never find fault.

How was she to bear the change? It was true that her friend was going only half a mile from them; but Emma was aware that great must be the difference between a Mrs. Weston only half a mile from them, and a Miss Taylor in the house; and with all her advantages, natural and domestic. she was now in great danger of suffering from intellectual solitude. She dearly loved her father, but he was no companion for her. He could not meet her in conversation, rational or playful.

The evil of the actual disparity in their ages (and Mr. Woodhouse had not married early) was much increased by his constitution and habits: for having been a valetudinarian all his life, without activity of mind or body, he was a much older man in ways than in years; and though everywhere beloved for the friendliness of his heart and his amiable temper, his talents could not have recommended him at any time.

Her sister, though comparatively but little removed by matrimony, being settled in London, only sixteen miles off, was much beyond her daily reach; and many a long October and November evening must be struggled through at Hartfield before Christmas brought the next visit from Isabella and her husband and their little children, to fill the house and give her pleasant society again.

Highbury, the large and populous village almost amounting to a town, to which Hartfield, in spite of its separate lawn and shrubberies and name, did really belong, afforded her no equals. The Woodhouses were first in consequence there. All looked up to them. She had many acquaintances in the place, for her father was universally civil, but not one among them who could be accepted in lieu of Miss Taylor for even half a day. It

was a melancholy change; and Emma could not but sigh over it, and wish for impossible things, till her father awoke, and make it necessary to be cheerful. His spirits required support. He was a nervous man, easily depressed; fond of everybody that he was used to, and hating to part with them; hating change of every kind. Matrimony, as the origin of change, was always disagreeable; and he was by no means yet reconciled to his own daughter's marrying, nor could ever speak of her but with compassion, though it had been entirely a match of affection, when he was now obliged to part with Miss Taylor too; and from his habits of gentle selfishness, and of being never able to suppose that other people could feel differently from himself, he was very much disposed to think Miss Taylor had done as sad a thing for herself as for them, and would have been a great deal happier if she had spent all the rest of her life at Hartfield. Emma smiled and chatted as cheerfully as she could, to keep him from such thoughts; but when tea came, it was impossible for him not to say exactly as he had said at dinner, —

'Poor Miss Taylor! I wish she were here again. What a pity it is that Mr. Weston ever thought of her!'

'I cannot agree with you, papa; you know I cannot. Mr. Weston in such a good-humored, pleasant, excellent man, that he thoroughly deserves a good wife; and you would not have had Miss Taylor live with us forever, and bear all my odd humors, when she might have a house of her own?'

'A house of her own! but where is the advantage of a house of her own? This is three times as large; and you have never any odd humors, my dear.'

'How often we shall be going to see them, and they coming to see us! We shall be always meeting! *We* must begin; we must go and pay our wedding-visit very soon.'

'My dear, how am I to get so far? Randalls is such a distance! I could not walk half so far.'

'No, papa; nobody thought of your walking. We must go in the carriage, to be sure.'

'The carriage! But James will not like to put the horses to for such a little way; and where are the poor horses to be while we are paying our visit?'

'They are to be put into Mr. Weston's stable, papa. You know we have settled all that already. We talked it all over with Mr. Weston last night. And as for James, you may be very sure he will always like going to Randalls, because of his daughter being housemaid there. I only doubt whether he will ever take us anywhere else. That was your doing, papa. You got Hannah that good place. Nobody thought of Hannah till you mentioned her; James is so obliged to you!'

'I am very glad I did think of her. It was very lucky, for I would not have had poor James think himself slighted, upon any account, and I am sure she will make a very good servant; she is a civil. pretty spoken girl; I have a great opinion of her. Whenever I see her, she always courtesies and asks me how I do, in a very pretty manner; and when you have had her here to do needlework, I observe she always turns the lock of the door the right way, and never bangs it. I am sure she will be an excellent servant; and it will be a great comfort to poor Miss Taylor to have somebody about her that she is used to see. Whenever James goes over to see his daughter, you know, she will be hearing of us. He will be able to tell her how we all are.'

Emma spared no exertions to maintain this happier flow of ideas, and hoped, by the help of backgammon, to get her father tolerably through the evening, and be attacked by no regrets but her own. The backgammon table was placed; but a visitor immediately afterwards walked in and made it unnecessary.

Mr. Knightley, a sensible man about seven or eight and thirty, was not only a very old and intimate friend of the family, but particularly connected with it as the

elder brother of Isabella's husband.[1] He lived about a mile from Highbury, was a frequent visitor, and always welcome, and at this time more welcome than usual, as coming directly from their mutual connections in London. He had returned to a late dinner after some days' absence, and now walked up to Hartfield to say that all were well in Brunswick Square. It was a happy circumstance, and animated Mr. Woodhouse for some time. Mr. Knightley had a cheerful manner, which always did him good; and his many inquiries after 'poor Isabella' and her children were answered most satisfactorily. When this was over, Mr. Woodhouse gratefully observed, —

'It is very kind of you, Mr. Knightley, to come out at this late hour to call upon us. I am afraid you must have had a shocking walk.'

'Not at all, sir. It is a beautiful moonlight night; and so mild that I must draw back from your great fire.'

'But you must have found it very damp and dirty. I wish you may not catch cold.'

'Dirty, sir! Look at my shoes. Not a speck on them.'

'Well! that is quite surprising, for we have had a vast deal of rain here. It rained dreadfully hard for half an hour, while we were at breakfast. I wanted them to put off the wedding.'

'By the bye, I have not wished you joy. Being pretty well aware of what sort of joy you must both be feeling, I have been in no hurry with my congratulations; but I hope it all went off tolerably well. How did you all behave? Who cried most?'

'Ah, poor Miss Taylor! 't is a sad business.'

[1] 'Did ever hero enter more unassumingly on the scene? Was ever even the merest walking gentleman more succinctly or prosaically described? And yet George Knightley is a very hero of heroes, far in advance of Darcy, in *Pride and Prejudice*, where the highest manliness and generosity of character are in question.'—MISS KEDDIE. It will not be uninstructive to compare with this view the somewhat different opinion of Lord Brabourne, on page 27.

'Poor Mr. and Miss Woodhouse! if you please; but I cannot possibly say "poor Miss Taylor." I have a great regard for you and Emma; but when it comes to the question of dependence or independence! At any rate, it must be better to have only one to please than two.'

'Especially when *one* of those two is such a fanciful, troublesome creature!' said Emma, playfully. 'That is what you have in your head, I know; and what you would certainly say if my father were not by.'

'I believe it is very true, my dear, indeed,' said Mr. Woodhouse with a sigh. 'I am afraid I am sometimes very fanciful and troublesome.'

'My dearest papa! You do not think I could mean *you*, or suppose Mr. Knightley to mean *you*. What a horrible idea! Oh, no! I meant only myself. Mr. Knightley loves to find fault with me, you know — in a joke — it is all a joke. We always say what we like to one another.'

Mr. Knightley, in fact, was one of the few people who could see faults in Emma Woodhouse, and the only one who ever told her of them; and though this was not particularly agreeable to Emma herself, she knew it would be so much less so to her father, that she would not have him really suspect such a circumstance as her not being thought perfect by everybody.

'Emma knows I never flatter her,' said Mr. Knightley; 'but I meant no reflection on anybody. Miss Taylor has been used to have two persons to please; she will now have but one. The chances are that she must be a gainer.'

'Well,' said Emma, willing to let it pass, 'you want to hear about the wedding; and I shall be happy to tell you, for we all behaved charmingly. Everybody was punctual, everybody in their best looks; not a tear, and hardly a long face to be seen. Oh, no; we all felt that we were going to be only half a mile apart, and were sure of meeting every day.'

'Dear Emma bears everything so well,' said her father. 'But, Mr. Knightley, she is really very sorry to lose poor Miss Taylor, and I am sure she *will* miss her more than she thinks for.'

Emma turned away her head, divided between tears and smiles.

'It is impossible that Emma should not miss such a companion,' said Mr. Knightley. 'We should not like her so well as we do, sir, if we could suppose it; but she knows how much the marriage is to Miss Taylor's advantage; she knows how very acceptable it must be at Miss Taylor's time of life to be settled in a home of her own, and how important to her to be secure of a comfortable provision, and therefore cannot allow herself to feel so much pain as pleasure. Every friend of Miss Taylor must be glad to have her so happily married.'

'And you have forgotten one matter of joy to me,' said Emma, 'and a very considerable one,—that I made the match myself. I made the match, you know, four years ago; and to have it take place, and be proved in the right, when so many people said Mr. Weston would never marry again, may comfort me for anything.'

Mr. Knightley shook his head at her. Her father fondly replied, 'Ah, my dear, I wish you would not make matches and foretell things, for whatever you say always comes to pass! Pray do not make any more matches.'

'I promise you to make none for myself, papa; but I must, indeed, for other people. It is the greatest amusement in the world! And after such success, you know! Everybody said that Mr. Weston would never marry again. Oh, dear, no! Mr. Weston, who had been a widower so long, and who seemed so perfectly comfortable without a wife, so constantly occupied either in his business in town or among his friends here, always acceptable wherever he went, always cheerful,—

Mr. Weston need not spend a single evening in the year alone if he did not like it. Oh, no, Mr. Weston certainly would never marry again! Some people even talked of a promise to his wife on her death-bed, and others of the son and the uncle not letting him. All manner of solemn nonsense was talked on the subject, but I believed none of it. Ever since the day (about four years ago) that Miss Taylor and I met with him in Broadway Lane, when, because it began to mizzle,[1] he darted away with so much gallantry, and borrowed two umbrellas for us from Farmer Mitchell's, I made up my mind on the subject. I planned the match from that hour; and when such success has blessed me in this instance, dear papa, you cannot think that I shall leave off match-making.'

'I do not understand what you mean by "success,"' said Mr. Knightley. 'Success supposes endeavor. Your time has been properly and delicately spent, if you have been endeavoring for the last four years to bring about this marriage. A worthy employment for a young lady's mind! But if, which I rather imagine, your making the match, as you call it, means only your planning it, your saying to yourself one idle day, "I think it would be a very good thing for Miss Taylor if Mr. Weston were to marry her," and saying it again to yourself every now and then afterwards, — why do you talk of success? Where is your merit? What are you proud of? You made a lucky guess; and *that* is all that can be said.'

'And have you never known the pleasure and triumph of a lucky guess? I pity you. I thought you cleverer; for, depend upon it, a lucky guess is never merely luck. There is always some talent in it. And as to my poor word "success," which you quarrel with, I do not know that I am so entirely without any claim to it. You have drawn two pretty pictures; but I

[1] *Mizzle.* To rain in fine drops. A word seldom used now in literature or conversation.

think there may be a third, — a something between the do-nothing and the do-all. If I had not promoted Mr. Weston's visits here, and given many little encouragements, and smoothed many little matters, it might not have come to anything after all. I think you must know Hartfield enough to comprehend that.'

'A straight-forward, open-hearted man like Weston, and a rational unaffected woman like Miss Taylor, may be safely left to manage their own concerns. You are more likely to have done harm to yourself than good to them by interference.'

'Emma never thinks of herself, if she can do good to others,' rejoined Mr. Woodhouse, understanding but in part. 'But, my dear, pray do not make any more matches; they are silly things, and break up one's family circle grievously.'

'Only one more, papa; only for Mr. Elton. Poor Mr. Elton! You like Mr. Elton, papa; I must look about for a wife for him. There is nobody in Highbury who deserves him, — and he has been here a whole year, and has fitted up his house so comfortably that it would be a shame to have him single any longer; and I thought when he was joining their hands to-day, he looked so very much as if he would like to have the same kind office done for him! I think very well of Mr. Elton, and this is the only way I have of doing him a service.'

'Mr. Elton is a very pretty young man, to be sure, and a very good young man, and I have a great regard for him. But if you want to show him any attention, my dear, ask him to come and dine with us some day. That will be a much better thing. I dare say Mr. Knightley will be so kind as to meet him.'

'With a great deal of pleasure, sir, at any time,' said Mr. Knightley, laughing; 'and I agree with you entirely, that it will be a much better thing. Invite him to dinner, Emma, and help him to the best of the fish and the chicken, but leave him to choose his own wife.

Depend upon it, a man of six or seven and twenty can take care of himself.'

[Chapter II. relates mainly to the concerns of Mr. Weston, and includes an account of his first marriage and of his son Frank, who has been brought up as the heir of his uncle Churchill, whose name he has adopted.]

CHAPTER III.

Mr. Woodhouse was fond of society in his own way. He liked very much to have his friends come and see him; and from various united causes — from his long residence at Hartfield and his good-nature, from his fortune, his house, and his daughter — he could command the visits of his own little circle in a great measure as he liked. He had not much intercourse with any families beyond that circle: his horror of late hours and large dinner-parties made him unfit for any acquaintance but such as would visit him on his own terms. Fortunately for him, Highbury, including Randalls in the same parish, and Donwell Abbey in the parish adjoining, the seat of Mr. Knightley, comprehended many such. Not unfrequently, through Emma's persuasion, he had some of the chosen and the best to dine with him. But evening parties were what he preferred; and, unless he fancied himself at any time unequal to company, there was scarcely an evening in the week in which Emma could not make up a card-table for him.

Real, long-standing regard brought the Westons and Mr. Knightley; and by Mr. Elton, a young man living alone without liking it, the privilege of exchanging any vacant evening of his own blank solitude for the elegancies and society of Mr. Woodhouse's drawing-room, and the smiles of his lovely daughter, was in no danger of being thrown away.

After these came a second set, among the most come-

at-able of whom were Mrs. and Miss Bates and Mrs. Goddard, three ladies almost always at the service of an invitation from Hartfield, and who were fetched and carried home so often, that Mr. Woodhouse thought it no hardship for either James or the horses. Had it taken place only once a year, it would have been a grievance.

Mrs. Bates, the widow of a former vicar of Highbury, was a very old lady, almost past everything but tea and quadrille. She lived with her single daughter in a very small way, and was considered with all the regard and respect which a harmless old lady under such untoward circumstances can excite. Her daughter enjoyed a most uncommon degree of popularity, for a woman neither young, handsome, rich, nor married. Miss Bates stood in the very worst predicament in the world for having much of the public favor; and she had no intellectual superiority to make atonement to herself, or frighten those who might hate her into outward respect. She had never boasted either beauty or cleverness. Her youth had passed without distinction, and her middle of life was devoted to the care of a failing mother, and the endeavor to make a small income go as far as possible. And yet she was a happy woman, and a woman whom no one named without good-will. It was her own universal good-will and contented temper which worked such wonders. She loved everybody, was interested in everybody's happiness, quick-sighted to everybody's merits; thought herself a most fortunate creature, and surrounded with blessings in such an excellent mother, and so many good neighbors and friends, and a home that wanted for nothing. The simplicity and cheerfulness of her nature, her contented and grateful spirit, were a recommendation to everybody, and a mine of felicity to herself. She was a great talker upon little matters, which exactly suited Mr. Woodhouse, full of trivial communications and harmless gossip.

Mrs. Goddard was the mistress of a school, — not of a seminary, or an establishment, or anything which professed in long sentences of refined nonsense to combine liberal acquirements with elegant morality, upon new principles and new systems, and where young ladies for enormous pay might be screwed out of health and into vanity, but a real, honest, old-fashioned boarding-school, where a reasonable quantity of accomplishments were sold at a reasonable price, and where girls might be sent to be out of the way, and scramble themselves into a little education, without any danger of coming back prodigies. Mrs. Goddard's school was in high repute, and very deservedly; for Highbury was reckoned a particularly healthy spot. She had an ample house and garden, gave the children plenty of wholesome food, let them run about a great deal in the summer, and in winter dressed their chilblains with her own hands. It was no wonder that a train of twenty young couple now walked after her to church. She was a plain, motherly kind of woman, who had worked hard in her youth, and now thought herself entitled to the occasional holiday of a tea-visit; and having formerly owed much to Mr. Woodhouse's kindness, felt his particular claim on her to leave her neat parlor, hung round with fancy work, whenever she could, and win or lose[1] a few sixpences by his fireside.

These were the ladies whom Emma found herself very frequently able to collect, and happy was she, for her father's sake, in the power; though, as far as she was herself concerned, it was no remedy for the absence of Mrs. Weston. She was delighted to see her father look comfortable, and very much pleased with herself

[1] In Miss Austen's day small stakes were commonly played for at card parties in polite society, and the practice does not seem to have been considered at all objectionable. In regard to this matter, the standard of public opinion is certainly higher now than formerly.

for contriving things so well; but the quiet prosings of three such women made her feel that every evening so spent was indeed one of the long evenings she had fearfully anticipated.

As she sat one morning looking forward to exactly such a close of the present day, a note was brought from Mrs. Goddard, requesting, in most respectful terms, to be allowed to bring Miss Smith with her: a most welcome request, for Miss Smith was a girl of seventeen, whom Emma knew very well by sight and had long felt an interest in, on account of her beauty. A very gracious invitation was returned, and the evening no longer dreaded by the fair mistress of the mansion.

Harriet Smith was the natural daughter of somebody. Somebody had placed her, several years back, at Mrs. Goddard's school, and somebody had lately raised her from the condition of scholar to that of parlor boarder.[1] This was all that was generally known of her history. She had no visible friends but what had been acquired at Highbury, and was now just returned from a long visit in the country to some young ladies who had been at school there with her.

She was a very pretty girl, and her beauty happened to be of a sort which Emma particularly admired. She was short, plump, and fair, with a fine bloom, blue eyes, light hair, regular features, and a look of great sweetness; and before the end of the evening Emma was as much pleased with her manners as her person, and quite determined to continue the acquaintance.

She was not struck by anything remarkably clever in Miss Smith's conversation, but she found her altogether very engaging, — not inconveniently shy, not unwilling to talk, and yet so far from pushing, showing so proper and becoming a deference, seeming so pleasantly grateful for being admitted to Hartfield, and so artlessly

[1] *Parlor boarder.* A pupil in a boarding school, who takes meals with the teacher's family.

impressed by the appearance of everything in so superior a style to what she had been used to, that she must have good sense and deserve encouragement. Encouragement should be given. Those soft blue eyes and all those natural graces should not be wasted on the inferior society of Highbury and its connections. The acquaintance she had already formed were unworthy of her. The friends from whom she had just parted, though very good sort of people, must be doing her harm. They were a family of the name of Martin, whom Emma well knew by character, as renting a large farm of Mr. Knightley, and residing in the parish of Donwell, — very creditably, she believed. She knew Mr. Knightley thought highly of them; but they must be coarse and unpolished, and very unfit to be the intimates of a girl who wanted only a little more knowledge and elegance to be quite perfect. *She* would notice her; she would improve her; she would detach her from her bad acquaintance, and introduce her into good society; she would form her opinions and manners. It would be an interesting and certainly a very kind undertaking; highly becoming her own situation in life, her leisure, and powers.

She was so busy in admiring those soft blue eyes, in talking and listening, and forming all these schemes in the in-betweens, that the evening flew away at a very unusual rate; and the supper-table, which always closed such parties, and for which she had been used to sit and watch the due time, was all set out and ready, and moved forwards to the fire, before she was aware. With an alacrity beyond the common impulse of a spirit which yet was never indifferent to the credit of doing everything well and attentively, with the real good-will of a mind delighted with its own ideas, did she then do all the honors of the meal, and help and recommend the minced chicken and scalloped oysters with an urgency which she knew would be acceptable to the early hours and civil scruples of their guests.

Upon such occasions poor Mr. Woodhouse's feelings were in sad warfare. He loved to have the cloth laid, because it had been the fashion of his youth; but his conviction of suppers being very unwholesome made him rather sorry to see anything put on it; and while his hospitality would have welcomed his visitors to everything, his care for their health made him grieve that they would eat.

Such another small basin of thin gruel as his own was all that he could with thorough self-approbation recommend; though he might constrain himself, while the ladies were comfortably clearing the nicer things, to say, —

'Mrs. Bates, let me propose your venturing on one of these eggs. An egg boiled very soft is not unwholesome. Serle understands boiling an egg better than anybody. I would not recommend an egg boiled by anybody else, — but you need not be afraid, they are very small, you see, — one of our small eggs will not hurt you. Miss Bates, let Emma help you to a *little* bit of tart, — a *very* little bit. Ours are all apple tarts. You need not be afraid of unwholesome preserves here. I do not advise the custard. Mrs. Goddard, what say you to *half* a glass of wine, — a *small* half glass, put into a tumbler of water? I do not think it could disagree with you.'[1]

Emma allowed her father to talk, but supplied her visitors in a much more satisfactory style; and on the present evening had particular pleasure in sending them away happy. The happiness of Miss Smith was quite equal to her intentions. Miss Woodhouse was so great a personage in Highbury, that the prospect of the introduction had given as much panic as pleasure; but the humble, grateful little girl went off with highly gratified feelings, delighted with the affability with

[1] Hospitable Mr. Woodhouse, in his concern for the health of his guests, would unwittingly have made of their supper a veritable Barmecide feast, could he have had his way.

which Miss Woodhouse had treated her all the evening, and actually shaken hands with her at last!

[Chapters IV.–VIII. reveal Mr. Elton in love with Emma, but supposed by the latter to be attached to Harriet; Emma's growing intimacy with Harriet, of which Mr. Knightley disapproves, and Robert Martin's offer of marriage to Harriet, which, by the advice of Emma, she declines, greatly to the displeasure of Mr. Knightley when he learns of it.]

CHAPTER IX.

Mr. Knightley might quarrel with her, but Emma could not quarrel with herself. He was so much displeased that it was longer than usual before he came to Hartfield again; and when they did meet, his grave looks showed that she was not forgiven. She was sorry, but could not repent. On the contrary, her plans and proceedings were more and more justified and endeared to her by the general appearance of the next few days.

The picture,[1] elegantly framed, came safely to hand soon after Mr. Elton's return, and being hung over the mantelpiece of the common sitting-room, he got up to look at it, and sighed out his half-sentences of admiration just as he ought; and as for Harriet's feelings, they were visibly forming themselves into as strong and steady an attachment as her youth and sort of mind admitted. Emma was soon perfectly satisfied of Mr. Martin's being no otherwise remembered than as he furnished a contrast with Mr. Elton of the utmost advantage to the latter.

Her views of improving her little friend's mind by a great deal of useful reading and conversation had never yet led to more than a few first chapters, and the intention of going on to-morrow. It was much easier to chat than to study; much pleasanter to let her imagina-

[1] A portrait of Harriet drawn by her friend Emma.

tion range and work at Harriet's fortune, than to be laboring to enlarge her comprehension, or exercise it on sober facts; and the only literary pursuit which engaged Harriet at present, the only mental provision she was making for the evening of life, was the collecting and transcribing all the riddles of every sort that she could meet with into a thin quarto of hot-pressed paper,[1] made up by her friend, and ornamented with ciphers and trophies.

In this age of literature, such collections on a very grand scale are not uncommon. Miss Nash, head teacher at Mrs. Goddard's, had written out at least three hundred; and Harriet, who had taken the first hint of it from her, hoped, with Miss Woodhouse's help, to get a great many more. Emma assisted with her invention, memory, and taste; and as Harriet wrote a very pretty hand, it was likely to be an arrangement of the first order, in form as well as quantity.

Mr. Woodhouse was almost as much interested in the business as the girls, and tried very often to recollect something worth their putting in. 'So many clever riddles as there used to be when he was young — he wondered he could not remember them; but he hoped he should in time.' And it always ended in 'Kitty, a fair but frozen maid.'

His good friend Perry, too, whom he had spoken to on the subject, did not at present recollect anything of the riddle kind; but he had desired Perry to be upon the watch, and as he went about so much, something, he thought, might come from that quarter.

It was by no means his daughter's wish that the intellects of Highbury in general should be put under requisition. Mr. Elton was the only one whose assistance she asked. He was invited to contribute any

[1] *Hot-pressed paper.* Paper which has been passed between hot cylinders in order to give it a polished or glossy surface. The process is often called calendering, from the calender, or machine, used in effecting it.

really good enigmas, charades, or conundrums that he might recollect; and she had the pleasure of seeing him most intently at work with his recollections; and at the same time, as she could perceive, most earnestly careful that nothing ungallant, nothing that did not breathe a compliment to the sex, should pass his lips. They owed to him their two or three politest puzzles; and the joy and exultation with which at last he recalled, and rather sentimentally recited, that well-known charade, —

'My first doth affliction denote,
Which my second is destined to feel;
And my whole is the best antidote
That affliction to soften and heal,' —

made her quite sorry to acknowledge that they had transcribed it some pages ago already.

'Why will not you write one yourself for us, Mr. Elton?' said she; 'that is the only security for its freshness; and nothing could be easier to you.'

'Oh, no; he had never written, hardly ever, anything of the kind in his life. The stupidest fellow! He was afraid not even Miss Woodhouse' — he stopped a moment — 'or Miss Smith could inspire him.'

The very next day, however, produced some proof of inspiration. He called for a few moments, just to leave a piece of paper on the table containing, as he said, a charade which a friend of his had addressed to a young lady, the object of his admiration; but which, from his manner, Emma was immediately convinced must be his own.

'I do not offer it for Miss Smith's collection,' said he. 'Being my friend's, I have no right to expose it in any degree to the public eye, but perhaps you may not dislike looking at it.'

The speech was more to Emma than to Harriet, which Emma could understand. There was deep consciousness about him, and he found it easier to meet

her eye than her friend's. He was gone the next moment: after another moment's pause, —

'Take it,' said Emma, smiling, and pushing the paper towards Harriet; 'it is for you. Take your own.'

But Harriet was in a tremor, and could not touch it; and Emma, never loath to be first, was obliged to examine it herself.

To Miss ——.

CHARADE.

My first displays the wealth and pomp of kings,
Lords of the earth! their luxury and ease.
Another view of man my second brings,
Behold him there, the monarch of the seas!

But, ah! united, what reverse we have!
Man's boasted power and freedom, all are flown;
Lord of the earth and sea, he bends a slave,
And woman, lovely woman, reigns alone.

Thy ready wit the word will soon supply;
May its approval beam in that soft eye!

She cast her eye over it, pondered, caught the meaning, read it through again to be quite certain, and quite mistress of the lines, and then passing it to Harriet, sat happily smiling, and saying to herself, while Harriet was puzzling over the paper in all the confusion of hope and dulness, 'Very well, Mr. Elton, very well indeed. I have read worse charades. *Courtship*, — a very good hint. I give you credit for it. This is feeling your way. This is saying very plainly, "Pray, Miss Smith, give me leave to pay my addresses to you. Approve my charade and my intentions in the same glance."

"May its approval beam in that soft eye."

Harriet exactly. Soft is the very word for her eye,— of all epithets, the justest that could be given.

"Thy ready wit the word will soon supply."

Humph — Harriet's ready wit! All the better. A man must be very much in love, indeed, to describe her so. Ah, Mr. Knightley, I wish you had the benefit of this! I think this would convince you. For once in your life you would be obliged to own yourself mistaken. An excellent charade, indeed, and very much to the purpose. Things must come to a crisis soon now.'

She was obliged to break off from these very pleasant observations, which were otherwise of a sort to run into great length, by the eagerness of Harriet's wondering questions.

'What can it be, Miss Woodhouse, — what can it be? I have not an idea; I cannot guess it in the least. What can it possibly be? Do try to find it out, Miss Woodhouse. Do help me. I never saw anything so hard. Is it kingdom? I wonder who the friend was — and who could be the young lady. Do you think it is a good one? Can it be a woman?

"And woman, lovely woman, reigns alone."

Can it be Neptune?

"Behold him there, the monarch of the seas!"

Or a trident, or a mermaid, or a shark? Oh, no; shark is only one syllable. It must be very clever, or he would not have brought it. Oh, Miss Woodhouse, do you think we shall ever find it out?'

'Mermaids and sharks! Nonsense! My dear Harriet, what are you thinking of? Where would be the use of his bringing us a charade made by a friend upon a mermaid or a shark? Give me the paper, and listen. For "Miss ——," read "Miss Smith."

"My first displays the wealth and pomp of kings,
Lords of the earth! their luxury and ease."

That is *court*.

"Another view of man, my second brings;
Behold him there, the monarch of the seas!"

That is *ship*, — plain as he can be. Now for the cream.

"But ah! united [*courtship*, you know], what reverse we have!
Man's boasted power and freedom, all are flown;
Lord of the earth and sea, he bends a slave,
And woman, lovely woman, reigns alone."

A very proper compliment! and then follows the application, which I think, my dear Harriet, you cannot find much difficulty in comprehending. Read it in comfort to yourself. There can be no doubt of its being written for you and to you.'

Harriet could not long resist so delightful a persuasion. She read the concluding lines, and was all flutter and happiness. She could not speak. But she was not wanted to speak. It was enough for her to feel. Emma spoke for her.

'There is so pointed and so particular a meaning in this compliment,' said she, 'that I cannot have a moment's doubt as to Mr. Elton's intentions. You are his object, — and you will soon receive the completest proof of it. I thought it must be so. I thought I could not be so deceived; but now it is clear: the state of his mind is as clear and decided as my wishes on the subject have been ever since I knew you. Yes, Harriet, just so long have I been wanting the very circumstance to happen which has happened. I could never tell whether an attachment between you and Mr. Elton were most desirable or most natural. Its probability and its eligibility have really so equalled each other! I am very happy. I congratulate you, my dear Harriet, with all my heart. This is an attachment which a woman may well feel pride in creating. This is a connection which offers nothing but good. It will give you everything that you want, — consideration, independence, a proper home, — it will fix you in the centre of all your real friends, close to Hartfield and to me, and confirm our

intimacy forever. This, Harriet, is an alliance which can never raise a blush in either of us.'

'Dear Miss Woodhouse,' and 'Dear Miss Woodhouse' was all that Harriet, with many tender embraces, could articulate at first; but when they did arrive at something more like conversation, it was sufficiently clear to her friend that she saw, felt, anticipated, and remembered just as she ought. Mr. Elton's superiority had very ample acknowledgment.

'Whatever you say is always right,' cried Harriet, 'and therefore I suppose, and believe, and hope it must be so; but otherwise I could not have imagined it. It is so much beyond anything I deserve. Mr. Elton, who might marry anybody! There cannot be two opinions about *him*. He is so very superior. Only think of those sweet verses — "To Miss ——." Dear me, how clever! Could it really be meant for me?'

'I cannot make a question or listen to a question about that. It is a certainty. Receive it on my judgment. It is a sort of prologue to the play, a motto to the chapter; and will soon be followed by matter-of-fact prose.'

'It is a sort of thing which nobody could have expected. I am sure, a month ago, I had no more idea myself! The strangest things do take place!'

'When Miss Smiths and Mr. Eltons get acquainted — they do indeed — and really it is strange; it is out of the common course that what is so evidently, so palpably desirable — what courts the pre-arrangement of other people — should so immediately shape itself into the proper form. You and Mr. Elton are by situation called together; you belong to one another by every circumstance of your respective homes. Your marrying will be equal to the match at Randalls. There does seem to be a something in the air of Hartfield which gives love exactly the right direction, and sends it into the very channel where it ought to flow.

"The course of true love never did run smooth —"

A Hartfield edition of Shakespeare would have a long note on that passage.'

'That Mr. Elton should really be in love with me, — me, of all people, who did not know him, to speak to him, at Michaelmas! And he, the very handsomest man that ever was, and a man that everybody looks up to, quite like Mr. Knightley! His company so sought after, that everybody says he need not eat a single meal by himself if he does not choose it; that he has more invitations than there are days in the week. And so excellent in the church! Miss Nash has put down all the texts he has ever preached from since he came to Highbury. Dear me! When I look back to the first time I saw him! How little did I think! The two Abbotts and I ran into the front room and peeped through the blind when we heard he was going by, and Miss Nash came and scolded us away, and stayed to look through herself; however, she called me back presently, and let me look too, which was very good-natured. And how beautiful we thought he looked! He was arm in arm with Mr. Cole.'

'This is an alliance which, whoever — whatever your friends may be, must be agreeable to them, provided at least they have common sense; and we are not to be addressing our conduct to fools. If they are anxious to see you *happily* married, here is a man whose amiable character gives every assurance of it; if they wish to have you settled in the same country and circle which they have chosen to place you in, here it will be accomplished; and if their only object is that you should, in the common phrase, be *well* married, here is the comfortable fortune, the respectable establishment, the rise in the world which must satisfy them.'

'Yes, very true. How nicely you talk! I love to hear you. You understand everything. You and Mr. Elton are one as clever as the other. This charade! If I had studied a twelvemonth, I could never have made anything like it.'

'I thought he meant to try his skill, by his manner of declining it yesterday.'

'I do think it is, without exception, the best charade I ever read.'

'I never read one more to the purpose, certainly.'

'It is as long again as almost all we have had before.'

'I do not consider its length as particularly in its favor. Such things in general cannot be too short.'

Harriet was too intent on the lines to hear. The most satisfactory comparisons were rising in her mind.

'It is one thing,' said she, presently, her cheeks in a glow, 'to have very good sense in a common way, like everybody else, and if there is anything to say, to sit down and write a letter, and say just what you must, in a short way; and another, to write verses and charades like this.'

Emma could not have desired a more spirited rejection of Mr. Martin's prose.

'Such sweet lines!' continued Harriet, — 'these two last! But how shall I ever be able to return the paper, or say I have found it out? Oh, Miss Woodhouse, what can we do about that?'

'Leave it to me. You do nothing. He will be here this evening, I dare say, and then I will give it him back, and some nonsense or other will pass between us, and you shall not be committed. Your soft eyes shall choose their own time for beaming. Trust to me.'

'Oh, Miss Woodhouse, what a pity that I must not write this beautiful charade into my book! I am sure I have not got one half so good.'

'Leave out the two last lines, and there is no reason why you should not write it into your book.'

'Oh, but those two lines are' —

'The best of all. Granted, — for private enjoyment; and for private enjoyment keep them. They are not at all the less written, you know, because you divide them. The couplet does not cease to be, nor does its meaning

change. But take it away, and all *appropriation* ceases, and a very pretty gallant charade remains, fit for any collection. Depend upon it, he would not like to have his charade slighted much better than his passion. A poet in love must be encouraged in both capacities, or neither. Give me the book; I will write it down, and then there can be no possible reflection on you.'

Harriet submitted, though her mind could hardly separate the parts, so as to feel quite sure that her friend were not writing down a declaration of love. It seemed too precious an offering for any degree of publicity.

'I shall never let that book go out of my own hands,' said she.

'Very well,' replied Emma; 'a most natural feeling, and the longer it lasts, the better I shall be pleased. But here is my father coming: you will not object to my reading the charade to him. It will be giving him so much pleasure. He loves anything of the sort, and especially anything that pays woman a compliment. He has the tenderest spirit of gallantry towards us all. You must let me read it to him.'

Harriet looked grave.

'My dear Harriet, you must not refine too much upon this charade. You will betray your feelings improperly if you are too conscious and too quick, and appear to affix more meaning, or even quite all the meaning which may be affixed to it. Do not be overpowered by such a little tribute of admiration. If he had been anxious for secrecy he would not have left the paper while I was by; but he rather pushed it towards me than towards you. Do not let us be too solemn on the business. He has encouragement enough to proceed, without our sighing out our souls over this charade.'

'Oh, no; I hope I shall not be ridiculous about it. Do as you please.'

Mr. Woodhouse came in, and very soon led to the subject again by the recurrence of his very frequent in-

quiry of 'Well, my dears, how does your book go on? Have you got anything fresh?'

'Yes, papa; we have something to read you, something quite fresh. A piece of paper was found on the table this morning (dropped, we suppose, by a fairy), containing a very pretty charade, and we have just copied it in.'

She read it to him, just as he liked to have anything read, slowly and distinctly, and two or three times over, with explanations of every part as she proceeded; and he was very much pleased, and, as she had foreseen, especially struck with the complimentary conclusion.

'Ay, that's very just, indeed; that's very properly said. Very true. "Woman, lovely woman." It is such a pretty charade, my dear, that I can easily guess what fairy brought it. Nobody could have written so prettily but you, Emma.' Emma only nodded, and smiled. After a little thinking, and a very tender sigh, he added, —

'Ah, it is no difficulty to see who you take after. Your dear mother was so clever at all those things. If I had but her memory. But I can remember nothing; not even that particular riddle which you have heard me mention: I can only recollect the first stanza; and there are several: —

"Kitty, a fair but frozen maid,
Kindled a flame I yet deplore;
The hoodwinked boy I called to aid,
Though of his near approach afraid,
So fatal to my suit before."

And that is all that I can recollect of it; but it is very clever all the way through. But I think, my dear, you said you had got it.'

'Yes, papa, it is written out in our second page. We copied it from the *Elegant Extracts*. It was Garrick's, you know.'

'Ay, very true: I wish I could recollect more of it.

The name makes me think of poor Isabella; for she was very near being christened Catherine after her grandmamma. I hope we shall have her here next week. Have you thought, my dear, where you shall put her, and what room there will be for the children?'

'Oh, yes — she will have her own room, of course; the room she always has; and there is the nursery for the children, — just as usual, you know. Why should there be any change?'

'I do not know, my dear: but it is so long since she was here, — not since last Easter, and then only for a few days. Mr. John Knightley's being a lawyer is very inconvenient. Poor Isabella! she is sadly taken away from us all; and how sorry she will be, when she comes, not to see Miss Taylor here.'

'She will not be surprised, papa, at least.'

'I do not know, my dear. I am sure I was very much surprised when I first heard she was going to be married.'

'We must ask Mr. and Mrs. Weston to dine with us while Isabella is here.'

'Yes, my dear, if there is time. But' — in a very depressed tone — 'she is coming for only one week. There will not be time for anything.'

'It is unfortunate that they cannot stay longer, — but it seems a case of necessity. Mr. John Knightley must be in town again on the 28th; and we ought to be thankful, papa, that we are to have the whole of the time they can give to the country, that two or three days are not to be taken out for the Abbey. Mr. Knightley promises to give up his claim this Christmas, though you know it is longer since they were with him than with us.'

'It would be very hard, indeed, my dear, if poor Isabella were to be anywhere but at Hartfield.'

Mr. Woodhouse could never allow for Mr. Knightley's claims on his brother or anybody's claims on Isabella, except his own. He sat musing a little while, and then said, —

'But I do not see why poor Isabella should be obliged to go back so soon, though he does. I think, Emma, I shall try and persuade her to stay longer with us. She and the children might stay very well.'

'Ah, papa, that is what you never have been able to accomplish, and I do not think you ever will. Isabella cannot bear to stay behind her husband.'

This was too true for contradiction. Unwelcome as it was, Mr. Woodhouse could only give a submissive sigh; and as Emma saw his spirits affected by the idea of his daughter's attachment to her husband, she immediately led to such a branch of the subject as must raise them.

'Harriet must give us as much of her company as she can while my brother and sister are here. I am sure she will be pleased with the children. We are very proud of the children, are not we, papa? I wonder which she will think the handsomest, Henry or John?'

'Ay, I wonder which she will. Poor little dears! how glad they will be to come. They are very fond of being at Hartfield, Harriet.'

'I dare say they are, sir. I am sure I do not know who is not.'

'Henry is a fine boy, but John is very like his mamma. Henry is the eldest; he was named after me, not after his father. John, the second, is named after his father. Some people are surprised, I believe, that the eldest was not; but Isabella would have him called Henry, which I thought very pretty of her. And he is a very clever boy indeed. They are all remarkably clever, and they have so many pretty ways. They will come and stand by my chair and say, "Grandpapa, can you give me a bit of string?" And once Henry asked me for a knife, but I told him knives were only made for grandpapas. I think their father is too rough with them very often.'

'He appears rough to you,' said Emma, 'because you are so very gentle yourself; but if you could com-

pare him with other papas, you would not think him rough. He wishes his boys to be active and hardy, and if they misbehave can give them a sharp word now and then; but he is an affectionate father, — certainly Mr. John Knightley is an affectionate man. The children are all fond of him.'

'And then their uncle comes in, and tosses them up to the ceiling in a very frightful way.'

'But they like it, papa; there is nothing they like so much. It is such enjoyment to them, that if their uncle did not lay down the rule of their taking turns, whichever began would never give way to the other.'

'Well, I cannot understand it.'

'That is the case with us all, papa.. One half of the world cannot understand the pleasures of the other.'

Later in the morning, and just as the girls were going to separate in preparation for the regular four-o'clock dinner, the hero of this inimitable charade walked in again. Harriet turned away; but Emma could receive him with the usual smile, and her quick eye soon discerned in his the consciousness of having made a push, — of having thrown a die; and she imagined he was come to see how it might turn up. His ostensible reason, however, was to ask whether Mr. Woodhouse's party could be made up in the evening without him, or whether he should be in the smallest degree necessary at Hartfield. If he were, everything else must give way; but otherwise his friend Cole had been saying so much about his dining with him, — had made such a point of it, — that he had promised him conditionally to come.

Emma thanked him, but could not allow of his disappointing his friend on their account; her father was sure of his rubber. He re-urged, she re-declined; and he seemed then about to make his bow, when, taking the paper from the table, she returned it.

'Oh, here is the charade you were so obliging as to leave with us; thank you for the sight of it. We ad-

mired it so much, that I have ventured to write it into Miss Smith's collection. Your friend will not take it amiss, I hope. Of course, I have not transcribed beyond the eight first lines.'

Mr. Elton certainly did not very well know what to say. He looked rather doubting, rather confused; said something about 'honor,' glanced at Emma and at Harriet, and then seeing the book open on the table took it up, and examined it very attentively. With the view of passing off an awkward moment, Emma smilingly said, —

'You must make my apologies to your friend; but so good a charade must not be confined to one or two. He may be sure of every woman's approbation while he writes with such gallantry.'

'I have no hesitation in saying,' replied Mr. Elton, though hesitating a good deal while he spoke, — 'I have no hesitation in saying — at least if my friend feels at all as *I* do — I have not the smallest doubt that, could he see his little effusion honored as *I* see it,' — looking at the book again, and replacing it on the table, — 'he would consider it as the proudest moment of his life.'

After this speech he was gone as soon as possible. Emma could not think it too soon; for with all his good and agreeable qualities there was a sort of parade in his speeches which was very apt to incline her to laugh. She ran away to indulge the inclination, leaving the tender and the sublime of pleasure to Harriet's share.

[The next seventeen chapters contain an account of the visit of John Knightley and his family to Hartfield; Mr. Elton's proposal of marriage to Emma, and her consequent chagrin and disappointment on Harriet's account; the return of Jane Fairfax to Highbury; the visit of Frank Churchill to the Westons; the party at Mrs. Cole's, and the news of Mr. Elton's engagement to Miss Hawkins, of Bristol.]

EMMA.

VOLUME THE SECOND.

CHAPTER IX.

EMMA did not repent her condescension in going to the Coles. The visit afforded her many pleasant recollections the next day; and all that she might be supposed to have lost on the side of dignified seclusion must be amply repaid in the splendor of popularity. She must have delighted the Coles, — worthy people, who deserved to be made happy! — and left a name behind her that would not soon die away.

Perfect happiness, even in memory, is not common; and there were two points on which she was not quite easy. She doubted whether she had not transgressed the duty of woman by woman, in betraying her suspicions of Jane Fairfax's feelings to Frank Churchill. It was hardly right; but it had been so strong an idea that it would escape her, and his submission to all that she told was a compliment to her penetration which made it difficult for her to be quite certain that she ought to have held her tongue.

The other circumstance of regret related also to Jane Fairfax, and there she had no doubt. She did unfeignedly and unequivocally regret the inferiority of her own playing and singing. She did most heartily grieve over the idleness of her childhood, and sat down and practised vigorously an hour and a half.

She was then interrupted by Harriet's coming in; and if Harriet's praise could have satisfied her she might soon have been comforted.

'Oh, if I could but play as well as you and Miss Fairfax!'

'Don't class us together, Harriet. My playing is no more like hers than a lamp is like sunshine.'

'Oh, dear, I think you play the best of the two. I think you play quite as well as she does. I am sure I had much rather hear you. Everybody last night said how well you played.'

'Those who knew anything about it must have felt the difference. The truth is, Harriet, that my playing is just good enough to be praised, but Jane Fairfax's is much beyond it.'

'Well, I always shall think that you play quite as well as she does, or that if there is any difference nobody would ever find it out. Mr. Cole said how much taste you had, and Mr. Frank Churchill talked a great deal about your taste, and said that he valued taste much more than execution.'

'Ah, but Jane Fairfax has them both, Harriet.'

'Are you sure? I saw she had execution, but I did not know she had any taste. Nobody talked about it, and I hate Italian singing; there is no understanding a word of it. Besides, if she does play so very well, you know, it is no more than she is obliged to do, because she will have to teach. The Coxes were wondering last night whether she would get into any great family. How did you think the Coxes looked?'

'Just as they always do, — very vulgar.'

'They told me something,' said Harriet, rather hesitatingly, 'but it is nothing of any consequence.'

Emma was obliged to ask what they had told her, though fearful of its producing Mr. Elton.

'They told me that Mr. Martin dined with them last Saturday.'

'Oh!'

'He came to their father upon some business, and he asked him to stay to dinner.'

'Oh!'

'They talked a great deal about him, especially Anne Cox. I do not know what she meant, but she asked me if I thought I should go and stay there again next summer.'

'She meant to be impertinently curious, just as such an Anne Cox should be.'

'She said he was very agreeable the day he dined there. He sat by her at dinner. Miss Nash thinks either of the Coxes would be very glad to marry him.'

'Very likely; I think they are, without exception, the most vulgar girls in Highbury.'

Harriet had business at Ford's. Emma thought it most prudent to go with her. Another accidental meeting with the Martins was possible, and, in her present state, would be dangerous.

Harriet, tempted by everything, and swayed by half a word, was always very long at a purchase; and while she was still hanging over muslins, and changing her mind, Emma went to the door for amusement. Much could not be hoped from the traffic of even the busiest part of Highbury: Mr. Perry walking hastily by; Mr. William Cox letting himself in at the office door; Mr. Cole's carriage horses returning from exercise, or a stray letter-boy on an obstinate mule, were the liveliest objects she could presume to expect; and when her eyes fell only on the butcher with his tray, a tidy old woman travelling homewards from shop with her full basket, two curs quarrelling over a dirty bone, and a string of dawdling children round the baker's little bow-window eying the gingerbread, she knew she had no reason to complain, and was amused enough, — quite enough still to stand at the door. A mind lively and at ease can do with seeing nothing, and can see nothing that does not answer.

She looked down the Randalls road. The scene en-

larged; two persons appeared, — Mrs. Weston and her son-in-law. They were walking into Highbury, — to Hartfield, of course: they were stopping, however, in the first place at Mrs. Bates's, whose house was a little nearer Randalls than Ford's, and had all but knocked when Emma caught their eye. Immediately they crossed the road and came forward to her; and the agreeableness of yesterday's engagement seemed to give fresh pleasure to the present meeting. Mrs. Weston informed her that she was going to call on the Bateses, in order to hear the new instrument.

'For my companion tells me,' said she, 'that I absolutely promised Miss Bates last night that I would come this morning. I was not aware of it myself. I did not know that I had fixed a day; but as he says I did, I am going now.'

'And while Mrs. Weston pays her visit, I may be allowed, I hope,' said Frank Churchill, 'to join your party and wait for her at Hartfield, if you are going home.'

Mrs. Weston was disappointed.

'I thought you meant to go with me. They would be very much pleased.'

'Me! I should be quite in the way. But perhaps I may be equally in the way here. Miss Woodhouse looks as if she did not want me. My aunt always sends me off when she is shopping. She says I fidget her to death; and Miss Woodhouse looks as if she could almost say the same. What am I to do?'

'I am here on no business of my own,' said Emma; 'I am only waiting for my friend. She will probably have soon done, and then we shall go home. But you had better go with Mrs. Weston and hear the instrument.'

'Well, if you advise it. But' — with a smile — 'if Colonel Campbell should have employed a careless friend, and if it should prove to have an indifferent tone, what shall I say? I shall be no support to Mrs.

Weston. She might do very well by herself. A disagreeable truth would be palatable through her lips, but I am the wretchedest being in the world at a civil falsehood.'

'I do not believe any such thing,' replied Emma; 'I am persuaded that you can be as insincere as your neighbors, when it is necessary; but there is no reason to suppose the instrument is indifferent. Quite otherwise, indeed, if I understood Miss Fairfax's opinion last night.'

'Do come with me,' said Mrs. Weston, 'if it be not very disagreeable to you. It need not detain us long. We will go to Hartfield afterwards. We will follow them to Hartfield. I really wish you to call with me: it will be felt so great an attention; and I always thought you meant it.'

He could say no more; and, with the hope of Hartfield to reward him, returned with Mrs. Weston to Mrs. Bates's door. Emma watched them in, and then joined Harriet at the interesting counter, trying, with all the force of her own mind, to convince her that if she wanted plain muslin it was of no use to look at figured, and that a blue riband, be it ever so beautiful, would still never match her yellow pattern. At last it was all settled, even to the destination of the parcel.

'Should I send it to Mrs. Goddard's, ma'am?' asked Mrs. Ford.

'Yes — no — yes, to Mrs. Goddard's. Only my pattern gown is at Hartfield. No, you shall send it to Hartfield if you please. But then, Mrs. Goddard will want to see it; and I could take the pattern gown home any day. But I shall want the riband directly; so it had better go to Hartfield, — at least the riband. You could make it into two parcels, Mrs. Ford, could not you?'

'It is not worth while, Harriet, to give Mrs. Ford the trouble of two parcels.'

'No more it is.'

'No trouble in the world, ma'am,' said the obliging Mrs. Ford.

'Oh, but indeed I would much rather have it only in one. Then, if you please, you shall send it all to Mrs. Goddard's — I do not know — no, I think, Miss Woodhouse, I may just as well have it sent to Hartfield, and take it home with me at night. What do you advise?'

'That you do not give another half-second to the subject. To Hartfield, if you please, Mrs. Ford.'

'Ay, that will be much best,' said Harriet, quite satisfied. 'I should not at all like to have it sent to Mrs. Goddard's.'

Voices approached the shop, or rather one voice and two ladies; Mrs. Weston and Miss Bates met them at the door.

'My dear Miss Woodhouse,' said the latter, 'I am just run across to entreat the favor of you to come and sit down with us a little while, and give us your opinion of our new instrument,—you and Miss Smith. How do you do, Miss Smith? — Very well, I thank you. — And I begged Mrs. Weston to come with me, that I might be sure of succeeding.'

'I hope Mrs. Bates and Miss Fairfax are — '

'Very well, I am much obliged to you. My mother is delightfully well, and Jane caught no cold last night. How is Mr. Woodhouse? I am so glad to hear such a good account. Mrs. Weston told me you were here. "Oh, then," said I, "I must run across; I am sure Miss Woodhouse will allow me just to run across and entreat her to come in: my mother will be so very happy to see her; and now we are such a nice party she cannot refuse." "Ay, pray do," said Mr. Frank Churchill, "Miss Woodhouse's opinion of the instrument will be worth having." "But," said I, "I shall be more sure of succeeding if one of you will go with me." "Oh," said he, "wait half a minute, till I have finished my job:" for, would you believe it, Miss Woodhouse, there he is, in the most

obliging manner in the world, fastening in the rivet of my mother's spectacles. The rivet came out, you know, this morning; so very obliging! For my mother had no use of her spectacles — could not put them on. And, by the bye, everybody ought to have two pair of spectacles; they should indeed. Jane said so. I meant to take them over to John Saunders the first thing I did, but something or other hindered me all the morning; first one thing and then another, there is no saying what, you know. At one time Patty came to say she thought the kitchen chimney wanted sweeping. "Oh," said I, "Patty, do not come with your bad news to me. Here is the rivet of your mistress's spectacles out." Then the baked apples came home; Mrs. Wallis sent them home by her boy; they are extremely civil and obliging to us, the Wallises, always. I have heard some people say that Mrs. Wallis can be uncivil, and give a very rude answer; but we have never known anything but the greatest attention from them. And it cannot be for the value of our custom now, for what is our consumption of bread, you know, — only three of us? Besides, dear Jane at present — and she really eats nothing — makes such a shocking breakfast, you would be quite frightened if you saw it. I dare not let my mother know how little she eats: so I say one thing, and then I say another, and it passes off. But about the middle of the day she gets hungry, and there is nothing she likes so well as these baked apples, and they are extremely wholesome; for I took the opportunity the other day of asking Mr. Perry: I happened to meet him in the street. Not that I had any doubt before; I have so often heard Mr. Woodhouse recommend a baked apple. I believe it is the only way that Mr. Woodhouse thinks the fruit thoroughly wholesome. We have apple-dumplings, however, very often. Patty makes an excellent apple-dumpling. Well, Mrs. Weston, you have prevailed, I hope, and these ladies will oblige us.'

Emma would be 'very happy to wait on Mrs. Bates,

etc.,' and they did at last move out of the shop, with no further delay from Miss Bates than, —

'How do you do, Mrs. Ford? I beg your pardon; I did not see you before. I hear you have a charming collection of new ribands from town. Jane came back delighted yesterday. Thank ye, the gloves do very well — only a little too large about the wrist; but Jane is taking them in.'

'What was I talking of?' said she, beginning again when they were all in the street.

Emma wondered on what, of all the medley, she would fix.

'I declare, I cannot recollect what I was talking of. Oh, my mother's spectacles. So very obliging of Mr. Frank Churchill! "Oh," said he, "I do think I can fasten the rivet; I like a job of this kind excessively." Which, you know, showed him to be so very — Indeed, I must say that, much as I had heard of him before, and much as I had expected, he very far exceeds anything — I do congratulate you, Mrs. Weston, most warmly. He seems everything the warmest parent could — "Oh," said he, "I can fasten the rivet. I like a job of that sort excessively." I never shall forget his manner. And when I brought out the baked apples from the closet, and hoped our friends would be so very obliging as to take some, "Oh," said he, directly, "there is nothing in the way of fruit half so good, and these are the finest-looking home-baked apples I ever saw in my life." That, you know, was so very — And I am sure, by his manner, it was no compliment. Indeed, they are very delightful apples, and Mrs. Wallis does them full justice, only we do not have them baked more than twice, and Mr. Woodhouse made us promise to have them done three times; but Miss Woodhouse will be so good as not to mention it. The apples themselves are the very finest sort for baking, beyond a doubt; all from Donwell — some of Mr. Knightley's most liberal supply. He sends us a sack

every year; and certainly there never was such a keeping apple anywhere as one of his trees — I believe there is two of them. My mother says the orchard was always famous in her younger days. But I was really quite shocked the other day; for Mr. Knightley called one morning, and Jane was eating these apples, and we talked about them, and said how much she enjoyed them, and he asked whether we were not got to the end of our stock. "I am sure you must be," said he, "and I will send you another supply; for I have a great many more than I can ever use. William Larkins let me keep a larger quantity than usual this year. I will send you some more before they get good for nothing." So I begged he would not — for really as to ours being gone I could not absolutely say that we had a great many left — it was but half a dozen indeed; but they should be all kept for Jane; and I could not at all bear that he should be sending us more, so liberal as he had been already; and Jane said the same. And when he was gone, she almost quarrelled with me: no, I should not say quarrelled, for we never had a quarrel in our lives; but she was quite distressed that I had owned the apples were so nearly gone: she wished I had made him believe we had a great many left. "Oh," said I, "my dear, I did say as much as I could." However, the very same evening William Larkins came over with a large basket of apples, the same sort of apples, a bushel at least, and I was very much obliged, and went down and spoke to William Larkins, and said everything, as you may suppose. William Larkins is such an old acquaintance! I am always glad to see him. But, however, I found afterwards from Patty that William said it was all the apples of *that* sort his master had; he had brought them all — and now his master had not one left to bake or boil. William did not seem to mind it himself, he was so pleased to think his master had sold so many; for William, you know, thinks more of his master's profit than anything; but Mrs. Hodges, he

said, was quite displeased at their being all sent away. She could not bear that her master should not be able to have another apple-tart this spring. He told Patty this, but bid her not mind it, and be sure not to say anything to us about it, for Mrs. Hodges *would* be cross sometimes, and as long as so many sacks were sold, it did not signify who ate the remainder. And so Patty told me, and I was excessively shocked, indeed! I would not have Mr. Knightley know anything about it for the world! He would be so very — I wanted to keep it from Jane's knowledge; but, unluckily, I had mentioned it before I was aware.'

Miss Bates had just done as Patty opened the door; and her visitors walked upstairs without having any regular narration to attend to, pursued only by the sounds of her desultory good-will.

'Pray take care, Mrs. Weston, there is a step at the turning. Pray take care, Miss Woodhouse, ours is rather a dark staircase — rather darker and narrower than one could wish. Miss Smith, pray take care. Miss Woodhouse, I am quite concerned, I am sure you hit your foot. Miss Smith, the step at the turning.'

[The remainder of volume second is busied with further accounts of Frank Churchill; his return to his uncle's; the arrival of Mrs. Elton; her sudden friendship for Jane Fairfax; and Emma's liking for Frank Churchill.]

EMMA.

VOLUME THE THIRD.

CHAPTER II.

No misfortune occurred, again to prevent the ball. The day approached, the day arrived; and after a morning of some anxious watching, Frank Churchill, in all the certainty of his own self, reached Randalls before dinner, and everything was safe.

No second meeting had there yet been between him and Emma. The room at the Crown was to witness it; but it would be better than a common meeting in a crowd. Mr. Weston had been so very earnest in his entreaties for her early attendance, for her arriving there as soon as possible after themselves, for the purpose of taking her opinion as to the propriety and comfort of the rooms before any other person came, that she could not refuse him, and must therefore spend some quiet interval in the young man's company. She was to convey Harriet, and they drove to the Crown in good time, the Randalls party just sufficiently before them.

Frank Churchill seemed to have been on the watch; and though he did not say much, his eyes declared that he meant to have a delightful evening. They all walked about together, to see that everything was as it should be; and within a few minutes were joined by the contents of another carriage, which Emma could not hear the sound of at first, without great surprise. 'So un-

reasonably early!' she was going to exclaim; but she presently found that it was a family of old friends, who were coming, like herself, by particular desire, to help Mr. Weston's judgment; and they were so very closely followed by another carriage of cousins, who had been entreated to come early with the same distinguishing earnestness, on the same errand, that it seemed as if half the company might soon be collected together for the purpose of preparatory inspection.

Emma perceived that her taste was not the only taste on which Mr. Weston depended, and felt that to be the favorite and intimate of a man who had so many intimates and confidants, was not the very first distinction in the scale of vanity. She liked his open manners, but a little less of open-heartedness would have made him a higher character. General benevolence, but not general friendship, made a man what he ought to be. She could fancy such a man.

The whole party walked about, and looked, and praised again; and then, having nothing else to do, formed a sort of half-circle round the fire, to observe in their various modes, till other subjects were started, that, though *May*, a fire in the evening was still very pleasant.

Emma found that it was not Mr. Weston's fault that the number of privy counsellors was not yet larger. They had stopped at Mrs. Bates's door to offer the use of their carriage, but the aunt and niece were to be brought by the Eltons.

Frank was standing by her, but not steadily; there was a restlessness, which showed a mind not at ease. He was looking about, he was going to the door, he was watching for the sound of other carriages, — impatient to begin, or afraid of being always near her.

Mrs. Elton was spoken of. 'I think she must be here soon,' said he. 'I have a great curiosity to see Mrs. Elton, I have heard so much of her. It cannot be long, I think, before she comes.'

A carriage was heard. He was on the move immediately; but coming back, said, —

'I am forgetting that I am not acquainted with her. I have never seen either Mr. or Mrs. Elton. I have no business to put myself forward.'

Mr. and Mrs. Elton appeared; and all the smiles and the proprieties passed.

'But Miss Bates and Miss Fairfax!' said Mr. Weston, looking about. 'We thought you were to bring them.'

The mistake had been slight. The carriage was sent for them now. Emma longed to know what Frank's first opinion of Mrs. Elton might be; how he was affected by the studied elegance of her dress, and her smiles of graciousness. He was immediately qualifying himself to form an opinion, by giving her very proper attention after the introduction had passed.

In a few minutes the carriage returned. Somebody talked of rain. 'I will see that there are umbrellas, sir,' said Frank to his father: 'Miss Bates must not be forgotten;' and away he went. Mr. Weston was following; but Mrs. Elton detained him, to gratify him by her opinion of his son; and so briskly did she begin, that the young man himself, though by no means moving slowly, could hardly be out of hearing.

'A very fine young man, indeed, Mr. Weston. You know I candidly told you I should form my own opinion; and I am happy to say that I am extremely pleased with him. You may believe me. I never compliment. I think him a very handsome young man, and his manners are precisely what I like and approve, — so truly the gentleman, without the least conceit or puppyism. You must know I have a vast dislike to puppies — quite a horror of them. They were never tolerated at Maple Grove. Neither Mr. Suckling nor me had ever any patience with them; and we used sometimes to say very cutting things. Selina, who is mild almost to a fault, bore with them much better.'

While she talked of his son, Mr. Weston's attention was chained; but when she got to Maple Grove he could recollect that there were ladies just arriving to be attended to, and with happy smiles must hurry away.

Mrs. Elton turned to Mrs. Weston. 'I have no doubt of its being our carriage with Miss Bates and Jane. Our coachman and horses are so extremely expeditious! I believe we drive faster than anybody. What a pleasure it is to send one's carriage for a friend! I understand you were so kind as to offer, but another time it will be quite unnecessary. You may be very sure I shall always take care of *them*.'

Miss Bates and Miss Fairfax, escorted by the two gentlemen, walked into the room; and Mrs. Elton seemed to think it as much her duty as Mrs. Weston's to receive them. Her gestures and movements might be understood by any one who looked on like Emma; but her words, everybody's words, were soon lost under the incessant flow of Miss Bates, who came in talking, and had not finished her speech under many minutes after her being admitted into the circle at the fire. As the door opened she was heard, —

'So very obliging of you! — No rain at all. Nothing to signify. I do not care for myself. Quite thick shoes. And Jane declares — Well [as soon as she was within the door], well! This is brilliant indeed! This is admirable! Excellently contrived, upon my word. Nothing wanting. Could not have imagined it. So well lighted up! Jane, Jane, look! did you ever see anything? Oh! Mr. Weston, you must really have had Aladdin's lamp. Good Mrs. Stokes would not know her own room again. I saw her as I came in; she was standing in the entrance. "Oh, Mrs. Stokes," said I — but I had not time for more.' She was now met by Mrs. Weston. 'Very well, I thank you, ma'am. I hope you are quite well. Very happy to hear it. So afraid you might have a headache! Seeing you pass by so often, and knowing how much trouble you must have.

Delighted to hear it indeed. — Ah! dear Mrs. Elton, so obliged to you for the carriage; excellent time; Jane and I quite ready. Did not keep the horses a moment. Most comfortable carriage. Oh, and I am sure our thanks are due to you, Mrs. Weston, on that score. Mrs. Elton had most kindly sent Jane a note, or we should have been. But two such offers in one day! Never were such neighbors. I said to my mother, "Upon my word, ma'am." Thank you, my mother is remarkably well. Gone to Mr. Woodhouse's. I made her take her shawl, — for the evenings are not warm, — her large new shawl, Mrs. Dixon's wedding present. So kind of her to think of my mother! Bought at Weymouth, you know; Mr. Dixon's choice. There were three others, Jane says, which they hesitated about some time. Colonel Campbell rather preferred an olive. — My dear Jane, are you sure you did not wet your feet? It was but a drop or two, but I am so afraid: but Mr. Frank Churchill was so extremely — and there was a mat to step upon. I shall never forget his extreme politeness. Oh, Mr. Frank Churchill, I must tell you my mother's spectacles have never been in fault since; the rivet never came out again. My mother often talks of your good-nature: does not she, Jane? Do not we often talk of Mr. Frank Churchill? Ah! here's Miss Woodhouse. Dear Miss Woodhouse, how do you do? Very well, I thank you, quite well. This is meeting quite in fairy-land. Such a transformation! Must not compliment, I know (eying Emma most complacently) — that would be rude; but upon my word, Miss Woodhouse, you do look — how do you like Jane's hair? You are a judge. She did it all herself. Quite wonderful how she does her hair! No hair-dresser from London, I think, could. — Ah! Dr. Hughes, I declare — and Mrs. Hughes. Must go and speak to Dr. and Mrs. Hughes, for a moment. How do you do? How do you do? Very well, I thank you. This is delightful, is not it? Where's dear Mr. Richard? Oh, there he is! Don't

disturb him. Much better employed talking to the young ladies. How do you do, Mr. Richard? I saw you the other day as you rode through the town. Mrs. Otway, I protest! and good Mr. Otway, and Miss Otway, and Miss Caroline. Such a host of friends! and Mr. George and Mr. Arthur! How do you do? How do you all do? Quite well, I am much obliged to you. Never better. Don't I hear another carriage? Who can this be? — very likely the worthy Coles. Upon my word, this is charming, to be standing about among such friends! And such a noble fire! I am quite roasted. No coffee, I thank you, for me; never take coffee. A little tea, if you please, sir, by-and-by; no hurry. Oh, here it comes! Everything so good!'

Frank Churchill returned to his station by Emma; and as soon as Miss Bates was quiet, she found herself necessarily overhearing the discourse of Mrs. Elton and Miss Fairfax, who were standing a little way behind her. He was thoughtful. Whether he were overhearing too, she could not determine. After a good many compliments to Jane on her dress and look, — compliments very quietly and properly taken, — Mrs. Elton was evidently wanting to be complimented herself — and it was, 'How do you like my gown? — How do you like my trimming? — How has Wright done my hair?' with many other relative questions, all answered with patient politeness. Mrs. Elton then said, —

'Nobody can think less of dress in general than I do: but upon such an occasion as this, when everybody's eyes are so much upon me, and in compliment to the Westons, who I have no doubt are giving this ball chiefly to do me honor, — I would not wish to be inferior to others: and I see very few pearls in the room except mine. So, Frank Churchill is a capital dancer, I understand. We shall see if our styles suit. A fine young man, certainly, is Frank Churchill. I like him very well.'

At this moment Frank began talking so vigorously

that Emma could not but imagine he had overheard his own praises, and did not want to hear more; and the voices of the ladies were drowned for a while, till another suspension brought Mrs. Elton's tones again distinctly forward. Mr. Elton had just joined them, and his wife was exclaiming, —

'Oh, you have found us out at last, have you, in our seclusion? I was this moment telling Jane I thought you would begin to be impatient for tidings of us.'

'Jane,' repeated Frank Churchill, with a look of surprise and displeasure. 'That is easy; but Miss Fairfax does not disapprove it, I suppose.'

'How do you like Mrs. Elton?' said Emma in a whisper.

'Not at all.'

'You are ungrateful.'

'Ungrateful! what do you mean?' Then changing from a frown to a smile, — 'No, do not tell me; I do not want to know what you mean. Where is my father? When are we to begin dancing?'

Emma could hardly understand him: he seemed in an odd humor. He walked off to find his father, but was quickly back again with both Mr. and Mrs. Weston. He had met with them in a little perplexity, which must be laid before Emma. It had just occurred to Mrs. Weston that Mrs. Elton must be asked to begin the ball; that she would expect it; which interfered with all their wishes of giving Emma that distinction. Emma heard the sad truth with fortitude.

'And what are we to do for a proper partner for her?' said Mr. Weston. 'She will think Frank ought to ask her.'

Frank turned instantly to Emma, to claim her former promise; and boasted himself an engaged man, which his father looked his most perfect approbation of — and it then appeared that Mrs. Weston was wanting *him* to dance with Mrs. Elton himself, and that their business was to help to persuade him into it, which was done

pretty soon. Mr. Weston and Mrs. Elton led the way; Mr. Frank Churchill and Miss Woodhouse followed. Emma must submit to stand second to Mrs. Elton, though she had always considered the ball as peculiarly for her. It was almost enough to make her think of marrying.

Mrs. Elton had undoubtedly the advantage at this time, in vanity completely gratified; for though she had intended to begin with Frank Churchill, she could not lose by the change. Mr. Weston might be his son's superior. In spite of this little rub, however, Emma was smiling with enjoyment, delighted to see the respectable length of the set as it was forming, and to feel that she had so many hours of unusual festivity before her. She was more disturbed by Mr. Knightley's not dancing than by anything else. There he was, among the standers-by, where he ought not to be; he ought to be dancing, — not classing himself with the husbands, and fathers, and whist-players, who were pretending to feel an interest in the dance till their rubbers were made up, — so young as he looked! He could not have appeared to greater advantage perhaps anywhere, than where he had placed himself. His tall, firm, upright figure, among the bulky forms and stooping shoulders of the elderly men, was such as Emma felt must draw everybody's eyes; and, excepting her own partner, there was not one among the whole row of young men who could be compared with him. He moved a few steps nearer, and those few steps were enough to prove in how gentlemanlike a manner, with what natural grace, he must have danced, would he but take the trouble. Whenever she caught his eye she forced him to smile; but in general he was looking grave. She wished he could love a ball-room better, and could like Frank Churchill better. He seemed often observing her. She must not flatter herself that he thought of her dancing; but if he were criticising her behavior she did not feel afraid. There

was nothing like flirtation between her and her partner. They seemed more like cheerful, easy friends than lovers. That Frank Churchill thought less of her than he had done was indubitable.

The ball proceeded pleasantly. The anxious cares, the incessant attentions of Mrs. Weston were not thrown away. Everybody seemed happy; and the praise of being a delightful ball, which is seldom bestowed till after a ball has ceased to be, was repeatedly given in the very beginning of the existence of this. Of very important, very recordable events, it was not more productive than such meetings usually are. There was one, however, which Emma thought something of. — The two last dances before supper were begun, and Harriet had no partner, — the only young lady sitting down, — and so equal had been hitherto the number of dancers, that how there could be any one disengaged was the wonder. But Emma's wonder lessened soon afterwards, on seeing Mr. Elton sauntering about. He would not ask Harriet to dance if it were possible to be avoided: she was sure he would not; and she was expecting him every moment to escape into the card-room.

Escape, however, was not his plan. He came to the part of the room where the sitters-by were collected, spoke to some, and walked about in front of them, as if to show his liberty, and his resolution of maintaining it. He did not omit being sometimes directly before Miss Smith, or speaking to those who were close to her. Emma saw it. She was not yet dancing; she was working her way up from the bottom, and had therefore leisure to look around, and by only turning her head a little she saw it all. When she was half way up the set, the whole group were exactly behind her, and she would no longer allow her eyes to watch; but Mr. Elton was so near that she heard every syllable of a dialogue which just then took place between him and Mrs. Weston; and she perceived that his wife, who

was standing immediately above her, was not only listening also, but even encouraging him by significant glances. The kind-hearted, gentle Mrs. Weston had left her seat to join him and say, 'Do not you dance, Mr. Elton?' to which his prompt reply was, 'Most readily, Mrs. Weston, if you will dance with me.'

'Me? — oh, no — I will get you a better partner than myself. I am no dancer.'

'If Mrs. Gilbert wishes to dance,' said he, 'I shall have great pleasure, I am sure; for, though beginning to feel myself rather an old married man, and that my dancing days are over, it would give me very great pleasure at any time to stand up with an old friend like Mrs. Gilbert.'

'Mrs. Gilbert does not mean to dance, but there is a young lady disengaged whom I should be very glad to see dancing, — Miss Smith.'

'Miss Smith — Oh, I had not observed. You are extremely obliging; and if I were not an old married man — but my dancing days are over, Mrs. Weston. You will excuse me. Anything else I should be most happy to do, at your command; but my dancing days are over.'

Mrs. Weston said no more; and Emma could imagine with what surprise and mortification she must be returning to her seat. This was Mr. Elton, — the amiable, obliging, gentle Mr. Elton! She looked round for a moment; he had joined Mr. Knightley at a little distance, and was arranging himself for settled conversation, while smiles of high glee passed between him and his wife.

She would not look again. Her heart was in a glow, and she feared her face might be as hot.

In another moment a happier sight caught her, — Mr. Knightley leading Harriet to the set! Never had she been more surprised, seldom more delighted, than at that instant. She was all pleasure and gratitude, both for Harriet and herself, and longed to be thanking him;

and though too distant for speech, her countenance said much, as soon as she could catch his eye again.

His dancing proved to be just what she had believed it, — extremely good; and Harriet would have seemed almost too lucky, if it had not been for the cruel state of things before, and for the very complete enjoyment and very high sense of the distinction which her happy features announced. It was not thrown away on her; she bounded higher than ever, flew farther down the middle, and was in a continual course of smiles.

Mr. Elton had retreated into the card-room, looking (Emma trusted) very foolish. She did not think he was quite so hardened as his wife, though growing very like her; *she* spoke some of her feelings, by observing audibly to her partner, —

'Knightley has taken pity on poor little Miss Smith! — Very good-natured, I declare.'

Supper was announced. The move began; and Miss Bates might be heard from that moment without interruption, till her being seated at table and taking up her spoon.

'Jane, Jane, my dear Jane, where are you? Here is your tippet. Mrs. Weston begs you to put on your tippet. She says she is afraid there will be draughts in the passage, though everything has been done — one door nailed up — quantities of matting — my dear Jane, indeed you must. Mr. Churchill, — oh, you are too obliging! — How well you put it on! — so gratified! Excellent dancing, indeed! — Yes, my dear, I ran home, as I said I should, to help grandmamma to bed, and got back again, and nobody missed me. I set off without saying a word, just as I told you. Grandmamma was quite well, had a charming evening with Mr. Woodhouse, a vast deal of chat, and backgammon. Tea was made downstairs, biscuits and baked apples and wine before she came away: amazing luck in some of her throws: and she inquired a great deal about you, how you were amused, and who were your

partners. "Oh," said I, "I shall not forestall Jane; I left her dancing with Mr. George Otway; she will love to tell you all about it herself to-morrow: her first partner was Mr. Elton; I do not know who will ask her next, perhaps Mr. William Cox." My dear sir, you are too obliging. Is there nobody you would not rather? — I am not helpless. Sir, you are most kind. Upon my word, Jane on one arm, and me on the other! Stop, stop, let us stand a little back, Mrs. Elton is going; dear Mrs. Elton, how elegant she looks — beautiful lace — now we all follow in her train. Quite the queen of the evening! — Well, here we are at the passage. Two steps. Jane, take care of the two steps. Oh, no, there is but one. Well, I was persuaded there were two. How very odd! I was convinced there were two and there is but one. I never saw anything equal to the comfort and style — candles everywhere. I was telling you of your grandmamma, Jane, — there was a little disappointment. The baked apples and biscuits, excellent in their way, you know; but there was a delicate fricassee of sweetbread and some asparagus brought in at first, and good Mr. Woodhouse, not thinking the asparagus quite boiled enough, sent it all out again. Now there is nothing grandmamma loves better than sweetbread and asparagus — so she was rather disappointed; but we agreed we would not speak of it to anybody, for fear of its getting round to dear Miss Woodhouse, who would be so very much concerned! — Well, this is brilliant! I am all amazement! — could not have supposed anything! — such elegance and profusion! I have seen nothing like it since — Well, where shall we sit? Where shall we sit? Anywhere, so that Jane is not in a draught. Where *I* sit is of no consequence. Oh, do you recommend this side? Well, I am sure, Mr. Churchill — only it seems too good — but just as you please. What you direct in this house cannot be wrong. Dear Jane, how shall we ever recollect half

the dishes for grandmamma? Soup too! Bless me! I should not be helped so soon, but it smells most excellent, and I cannot help beginning.'

Emma had no opportunity of speaking to Mr. Knightley till after supper; but when they were all in the ball-room again, her eyes invited him irresistibly to come to her and be thanked. He was warm in his reprobation of Mr. Elton's conduct; it had been unpardonable rudeness; and Mrs. Elton's looks also received the due share of censure.

'They aimed at wounding more than Harriet,' said he. 'Emma, why is it that they are your enemies?'

He looked with smiling penetration; and on receiving no answer, added, '*She* ought not to be angry with you, I suspect, whatever he may be. — To that surmise you say nothing, of course: but confess, Emma, that you did want him to marry Harriet.'

'I did,' replied Emma; 'and they cannot forgive me.'

He shook his head; but there was a smile of indulgence with it, and he only said, —

'I shall not scold you. I leave you to your own reflections.'

'Can you trust me with such flatterers? Does my vain spirit ever tell me I am wrong?'

'Not your vain spirit, but your serious spirit. If one leads you wrong, I am sure the other tells you of it.'

'I do own myself to have been completely mistaken in Mr. Elton. There is a littleness about him which you discovered, and which I did not; and I was fully convinced of his being in love with Harriet. It was through a series of strange blunders!'

'And in return for your acknowledging so much, I will do you the justice to say, that you would have chosen for him better than he has chosen for himself. Harriet Smith has some first-rate qualities, which Mrs. Elton is totally without. An unpretending, single-minded, artless girl — infinitely to be preferred by any man of sense

and taste to such a woman as Mrs. Elton. I found Harriet more conversable than I expected.'

Emma was extremely gratified. They were interrupted by the bustle of Mr. Weston calling on everybody to begin dancing again.

'Come, Miss Woodhouse, Miss Otway, Miss Fairfax, what are you all doing? Come, Emma, set your companions the example. Everybody is lazy! Everybody is asleep!'

'I am ready,' said Emma, 'whenever I am wanted.'

'Whom are you going to dance with?' asked Mr. Knightley.

She hesitated a moment, and then replied, 'With you, if you will ask me.'

'Will you?' said he, offering his hand.

'Indeed I will. You have shown that you can dance, and you know we are not really so much brother and sister as to make it at all improper.'

'Brother and sister! — no, indeed.'

[In the succeeding chapters Frank Churchill's secret engagement to Jane Fairfax is disclosed; Emma thinking him to have been attracted by Harriet is again distressed for her friend; Harriet fancies Mr. Knightley in love with her, and Emma then recognizes her own love for him; Mr. Knightley offers himself to Emma and is accepted, and Robert Martin again proposes to Harriet.]

CHAPTER XIX.

If Emma had still, at intervals, an anxious feeling for Harriet, a momentary doubt of its being possible for her to be really cured of her attachment to Mr. Knightley, and really able to accept another man from unbiassed inclination, it was not long that she had to suffer from the recurrence of any such uncertainty. A very few days brought the party from London; and she had no sooner an opportunity of being one hour alone with Harriet, than she became perfectly satisfied, unac-

countable as it was, that Robert Martin had thoroughly supplanted Mr. Knightley, and was now forming all her views of happiness.

Harriet was a little distressed — did look a little foolish at first; but having once owned that she had been presumptuous and silly, and self-deceived before, her pain and confusion seemed to die away with the words, and leave her without a care for the past, and with the fullest exultation in the present and future; for as to her friend's approbation, Emma had instantly removed every fear of that nature, by meeting her with the most unqualified congratulations. Harriet was most happy to give every particular of the evening at Astley's, and the dinner the next day; she could dwell on it all with the utmost delight. But what did such particulars explain? The fact was, as Emma could now acknowledge, that Harriet had always liked Robert Martin; and that his continuing to love her had been irresistible. Beyond this, it must ever be unintelligible to Emma.

The event, however, was most joyful; and every day was giving her fresh reason for thinking so. Harriet's parentage became known. She proved to be the daughter of a tradesman, rich enough to afford her the comfortable maintenance which had ever been hers, and decent enough to have always wished for concealment. Such was the blood of gentility which Emma had formerly been so ready to vouch for! It was likely to be as untainted, perhaps, as the blood of many a gentleman; but what a connection had she been preparing for Mr. Knightley, or for the Churchills, or even for Mr. Elton! The stain of illegitimacy, unbleached by nobility or wealth, would have been a stain indeed.

No objection was raised on the father's side; the young man was treated liberally; it was all as it should be: and as Emma became acquainted with Robert Martin, who was now introduced at Hartfield, she fully acknowledged in him all the appearance of sense and worth which could bid fairest for her little friend. She had no

doubt of Harriet's happiness with any good-tempered man; but with him, and in the home he offered, there would be the hope of more, — of security, stability, and improvement. She would be placed in the midst of those who loved her, and who had better sense than herself; retired enough for safety, and occupied enough for cheerfulness. She would be never led into temptation, nor left for it to find her out. She would be respectable and happy; and Emma admitted her to be the luckiest creature in the world, to have created so steady and persevering an affection in such a man; or, if not quite the luckiest, to yield only to herself.

Harriet, necessarily drawn away by her engagements with the Martins, was less and less at Hartfield, which was not to be regretted. The intimacy between her and Emma must sink; their friendship must change into a calmer sort of good-will; and, fortunately, what ought to be, and must be, seemed already beginning, and in the most gradual, natural manner.

Before the end of September Emma attended Harriet to church, and saw her hand bestowed on Robert Martin with so complete a satisfaction, as no remembrances even connected with Mr. Elton as he stood before them, could impair. Perhaps, indeed, at that time she scarcely saw Mr. Elton but as the clergyman whose blessing at the altar might next fall on herself. Robert Martin and Harriet Smith, the latest couple engaged of the three, were the first to be married.

Jane Fairfax had already quitted Highbury, and was restored to the comforts of her beloved home with the Campbells. The Mr. Churchills were also in town; and they were only waiting for November.

The intermediate month was the one fixed on, as far as they dared, by Emma and Mr. Knightley. They had determined that their marriage ought to be concluded while John and Isabella were still at Hartfield, to allow them the fortnight's absence in a tour to the seaside, which was the plan. John and Isabella, and

every other friend, were agreed in approving it. But Mr. Woodhouse — how was Mr. Woodhouse to be induced to consent? — he, who had never yet alluded to their marriage but as a distant event.

When first sounded on the subject he was so miserable that they were almost hopeless. A second allusion, indeed, gave less pain. He began to think it was to be, and that he could not prevent it, — a very promising step of the mind on its way to resignation. Still, however, he was not happy. Nay, he appeared so much otherwise, that his daughter's courage failed. She could not bear to see him suffering, to know him fancying himself neglected; and though her understanding almost acquiesced in the assurance of both the Mr. Knightleys, that when once the event were over, his distress would be soon over too, she hesitated — she could not proceed.

In this state of suspense they were befriended, not by any sudden illumination of Mr. Woodhouse's mind, or any wonderful change of his nervous system, but by the operation of the same system in another way. Mrs. Weston's poultry-house was robbed one night of all her turkeys, — evidently by the ingenuity of man. Other poultry yards in the neighborhood also suffered. Pilfering was *housebreaking* to Mr. Woodhouse's fears. He was very uneasy; and but for the sense of his son-in-law's protection, would have been under wretched alarm every night of his life. The strength, resolution, and presence of mind of the Mr. Knightleys commanded his fullest dependence. While either of them protected him and his, Hartfield was safe. But Mr. John Knightley must be in London again by the end of the first week in November.

The result of this distress was, that with a much more voluntary, cheerful consent than his daughter had ever presumed to hope for at the moment, she was able to fix her wedding-day; and Mr. Elton was called on, within a month from the marriage of Mr. and Mrs.

Robert Martin, to join the hands of Mr. Knightley and Miss Woodhouse.

The wedding was very much like other weddings, where the parties have no taste for finery or parade; and Mrs. Elton, from the particulars detailed by her husband, thought it all extremely shabby, and very inferior to her own. 'Very little white satin, very few lace veils; a most pitiful business! Selina would stare when she heard of it.' But in spite of these deficiencies, the wishes, the hopes, the confidence, the predictions of the small band of true friends who witnessed the ceremony, were fully answered in the perfect happiness of the union.

PERSUASION.

COMPLETED AT CHAWTON IN AUGUST, 1816;
PUBLISHED IN 1818.

PERSUASION.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Admiral Croft: Tenant of Kellynch Hall, the family estate of the Elliots in Somersetshire. A bluff, good-humored naval officer retired from the service.

Captain Benwick: A young naval officer in great grief at the death of his sweetheart, but given to reading poetry and finding consolation in the company of any sympathetic young woman. He inclines at first to Anne Elliot, but finally marries Louisa Musgrove.

Captain Harville: The friend of Captains Benwick and Wentworth. "A tall dark man, with a sensible, benevolent countenance." He is a naval officer in ill health, residing with his family at Lyme.

Rev. Charles Hayter: A young curate in love with his cousin, Henrietta Musgrove.

Charles Musgrove: Eldest son of Mr. and Mrs. Musgrove of Uppercross, married to Mary Elliot, the youngest daughter of Sir Walter, before the opening of the story. A pleasant agreeable fellow, with no very strong characteristics, but "in sense and temper undoubtedly superior to his wife." Before his marriage he had proposed to Anne Elliot.

Sir Walter Elliot: Owner of Kellynch Hall, Somersetshire. "Vanity was the beginning and end of his character, — vanity of person and of situation. He had been remarkably handsome in his youth, and at fifty-four was still a very fine man."

William Walter Elliot: Heir presumptive of Kellynch Hall. An unprincipled man, who when quite young repulses the advances of his relatives, and marries a wealthy woman of no family. After her death he becomes reconciled to the Elliots, and fearful that Sir Walter will marry again, and thus imperil his succession to the baronetcy, he pays assiduous court to Anne Elliot, that he may, as the baronet's son-in-law, interpose stronger objections to the other's re-marriage.

Mr. Shepherd: Sir Walter's lawyer. A man in middle life, who manages his pompous client with considerable adroitness.

Captain Frederick Wentworth: A naval officer who before the opening of the story has proposed to Anne Elliot, but has been rejected by her relatives on account of his inferior position. Eight years later he has acquired both rank and fortune, and upon seeing his former love his affection returns.

Mrs. Clay: A young widow, daughter of Mr. Shepherd. She acquires much influence over Sir Walter, whom she hopes to marry, and also over his daughter Elizabeth.

Elizabeth Elliot: Eldest daughter of Sir Walter. A fine-looking, supercilious woman of thirty, who cares little for any of her family except her father, and systematically snubs her younger sisters. She wishes to marry the heir presumptive, William Walter Elliot.

Anne Elliot: Second daughter of Sir Walter. The heroine of the story. A sensible, clear-headed person, with much native refinement and sweetness of disposition, and thoroughly unselfish. She is in love with Captain Wentworth, whom she finally marries.

Mrs. Croft: Wife to Admiral Croft, and sister to Captain Wentworth. A pleasant companionable woman of about forty, as much devoted to her husband as he to her.

Mrs. Musgrove (senior): Mother of Charles, Henrietta, and Louisa Musgrove. An estimable mother of a large household, wedded to a worthy country gentleman, living at Uppercross, in Somersetshire.

Mrs. Charles Musgrove: Wife of Charles Musgrove, and youngest daughter of Sir Walter Elliot. A selfish, dependent young woman, fond of her husband, and of hardly any one else.

Henrietta Musgrove: Eldest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Musgrove. A young woman of twenty, beloved by Charles Hayter.

Louisa Musgrove: Second daughter of the Musgroves. A wilful, high-spirited girl of nineteen, who is much attracted by Captain Wentworth, but finally marries Captain Benwick. Her fall upon the sea-wall at Lyme is one of the prominent incidents of the story.

Lady Russell: A neighbor and family friend of the Elliots, and especially fond of Anne. A dignified, sensible woman in middle life, benevolent and cultivated, but with some prejudices in favor of rank and position.

Mrs. Smith: A former school friend of Anne's, and at the time of her appearance in the story a widow of very small means, living at Bath. Through her Anne Elliot learns of the real character of Mr. Elliot, about the time she has reason to expect a proposal from him.

The scene of the story is first at Kellynch Hall, in Somerset, then at Uppercross, three miles distant. During a few succeeding chapters it is at Lyme, and for the second half of the book at Bath.

The time covered by the narrative extends from midsummer, 1814, to some time in the February following.

PERSUASION.

VOLUME THE FIRST.

CHAPTER I.

Sir Walter Elliot of Kellynch Hall, in Somersetshire, was a man who, for his own amusement, never took up any book but the *Baronetage*;[1] there he found occupation for an idle hour, and consolation in a distressed one; there his faculties were roused into admiration and respect, by contemplating the limited remnant of the earliest patents; there any unwelcome sensations, arising from domestic affairs, changed naturally into pity and contempt. As he turned over the almost endless creations of the last century — and there, if every other leaf were powerless, he could read his own history with an interest which never failed — this was the page at which the favorite volume always opened: —

'ELLIOT OF KELLYNCH HALL.

'Walter Elliot, born March 1, 1760, married, July 15, 1784, Elizabeth, daughter of James Stevenson, Esq., of South Park, in the county of Gloucester; by which lady (who died 1800) he has issue, Elizabeth, born June 1, 1785; Anne, born August 9, 1787; a still-born son, November 5, 1789; Mary, born November 20, 1791.'

[1] *Baronetage. The Baronetage of England,* published in 1801–1805 by Rev. William Betham.

Precisely such had the paragraph originally stood from the printer's hands; but Sir Walter had improved it by adding, for the information of himself and his family, these words, after the date of Mary's birth, — 'Married, December 16, 1810, Charles, son and heir of Charles Musgrove, Esq., of Uppercross, in the county of Somerset,' and by inserting most accurately the day of the month on which he had lost his wife.

Then followed the history and rise of the ancient and respectable family, in the usual terms: how it had been first settled in Cheshire, how mentioned in Dugdale,[1] serving the office of high sheriff, representing a borough in three successive parliaments, exertions of loyalty and dignity of baronet in the first year of Charles II., with all the Marys and Elizabeths they had married; forming altogether two handsome duodecimo pages, and concluding with the arms and motto, — 'Principal seat, Kellynch Hall, in the county of Somerset,' and Sir Walter's handwriting again in this finale, —

'Heir presumptive, William Walter Elliot, Esq., great-grandson of the second Sir Walter.'

Vanity was the beginning and the end of Sir Walter Elliot's character, — vanity of person and of situation. He had been remarkably handsome in his youth, and at fifty-four was still a very fine man. Few women could think more of their personal appearance than he did, nor could the valet of any new-made lord be more delighted with the place he held in society. He considered the blessing of beauty as inferior only to the blessing of a baronetcy; and the Sir Walter Elliot who united these gifts was the constant object of his warmest respect and devotion.

His good looks and his rank had one fair claim on his attachment; since to them he must have owed a wife of very superior character to anything deserved by his

[1] *Dugdale.* Sir William Dugdale (1605–1686) was an eminent antiquary, who published in 1675 *The Baronage of England*, to which book Betham's *Baronetage* is here said to refer.

own. Lady Elliot had been an excellent woman, sensible and amiable, whose judgment and conduct, if they might be pardoned the youthful infatuation which made her Lady Elliot, had never required indulgence afterwards. She had humored, or softened, or concealed his failings, and promoted his real respectability for seventeen years; and though not the very happiest being in the world herself, had found enough in her duties, her friends, and her children, to attach her to life, and make it no matter of indifference to her when she was called on to quit them. Three girls, the two eldest sixteen and fourteen, was an awful legacy for a mother to bequeath; an awful charge rather to confide to the authority and guidance of a conceited, silly father. She had, however, one very intimate friend, a sensible, deserving woman, who had been brought, by strong attachment to herself, to settle close by her, in the village of Kellynch; and on her kindness and advice Lady Elliot mainly relied for the best help and maintenance of the good principles and instruction which she had been anxiously giving her daughters.

This friend and Sir Walter did *not* marry, whatever might have been anticipated on that head by their acquaintance. Thirteen years had passed away since Lady Elliot's death, and they were still near neighbors and intimate friends; and one remained a widower, the other a widow.

That Lady Russell, of steady age and character, and extremely well provided for, should have no thought of a second marriage, needs no apology to the public, which is rather apt to be unreasonably discontented when a woman *does* marry again, than when she does *not:* but Sir Walter's continuing in singleness requires explanation. Be it known, then, that Sir Walter, like a good father (having met with one or two private disappointments in very unreasonable applications), prided himself on remaining single for his dear daughters' sake. For one daughter, his eldest, he would really have given

up anything which he had not been very much tempted to do. Elizabeth had succeeded, at sixteen, to all that was possible of her mother's rights and consequence; and being very handsome, and very like himself, her influence had always been great, and they had gone on together most happily. His two other children were of very inferior value. Mary had acquired a little artificial importance, by becoming Mrs. Charles Musgrove; but Anne, with an elegance of mind and sweetness of character which must have placed her high with any people of real understanding, was nobody with either father or sister; her word had no weight; her convenience was always to give way — she was only Anne.

To Lady Russell, indeed, she was a most dear and highly valued god-daughter, favorite, and friend. Lady Russell loved them all; but it was only in Anne that she could fancy the mother to revive again.

A few years before, Anne Elliot had been a very pretty girl, but her bloom had vanished early; and as, even in its height, her father had found little to admire in her (so totally different were her delicate features and mild dark eyes from his own), there could be nothing in them, now that she was faded and thin, to excite his esteem. He had never indulged much hope, he had now none, of ever reading her name in any other page of his favorite work. All equality of alliance must rest with Elizabeth; for Mary had merely connected herself with an old country family of respectability and large fortune, and had, therefore, *given* all the honor, and received none: Elizabeth would, one day or other, marry suitably.

It sometimes happens that a woman is handsomer at twenty-nine than she was ten years before; and, generally speaking, if there has been neither ill health nor anxiety, it is a time of life at which scarcely any charm is lost. It was so with Elizabeth — still the same handsome Miss Elliot that she had begun to be thirteen years ago; and Sir Walter might be excused, therefore,

in forgetting her age, or at least be deemed only half a fool, for thinking himself and Elizabeth as blooming as ever, amidst the wreck of the good looks of everybody else; for he could plainly see how old all the rest of his family and acquaintance were growing. Anne haggard, Mary coarse, every face in the neighborhood worsting; and the rapid increase of the crow's foot about Lady Russell's temples had long been a distress to him.

Elizabeth did not quite equal her father in personal contentment. Thirteen years had seen her mistress of Kellynch Hall, presiding and directing with a self-possession and decision which could never have given the idea of her being younger than she was. For thirteen years had she been doing the honors, and laying down the domestic law at home, and leading the way to the chaise and four, and walking immediately after Lady Russell out of all the drawing-rooms and dining-rooms in the country. Thirteen winters' revolving frosts had seen her opening every ball of credit which a scanty neighborhood afforded; and thirteen springs shown their blossoms, as she travelled up to London with her father for a few weeks' annual enjoyment of the great world. She had the remembrance of all this; she had the consciousness of being nine-and-twenty, to give her some regrets and some apprehensions; she was fully satisfied of being still quite as handsome as ever; but she felt her approach to the years of danger, and would have rejoiced to be certain of being properly solicited by baronet-blood within the next twelvemonth or two. Then might she again take up the book of books with as much enjoyment as in her early youth; but now she liked it not. Always to be presented with the date of her own birth, and see no marriage follow but that of a younger sister, made the book an evil; and more than once, when her father had left it open on the table near her, had she closed it, with averted eyes, and pushed it away.

She had had a disappointment, moreover, which that

book, and especially the history of her own family, must ever present the remembrance of. The heir presumptive, the very William Walter Elliot, Esq., whose rights had been so generously supported by her father, had disappointed her.

She had, while a very young girl, as soon as she had known him to be, in the event of her having no brother, the future baronet, meant to marry him; and her father had always meant that she should. He had not been known to them as a boy; but soon after Lady Elliot's death Sir Walter had sought the acquaintance; and though his overtures had not been met with any warmth, he had persevered in seeking it, making allowance for the modest drawing back of youth; and in one of their spring excursions to London, when Elizabeth was in her first bloom, Mr. Elliot had been forced into the introduction.

He was at that time a very young man, just engaged in the study of law; and Elizabeth found him extremely agreeable, and every plan in his favor was confirmed. He was invited to Kellynch Hall; he was talked of and expected all the rest of the year, but he never came. The following spring he was seen again in town, found equally agreeable, again encouraged, invited, and expected, and again he did not come, and the next tidings were that he was married. Instead of pushing his fortune in the line marked out for the heir of the house of Elliot, he had purchased independence by uniting himself to a rich woman of inferior birth.

Sir Walter had resented it. As the head of the house, he felt that he ought to have been consulted, especially after taking the young man so publicly by the hand; 'For they must have been seen together,' he observed, 'once at Tattersall's,[1] and twice in the lobby of the House of Commons.' His disapprobation was

[1] *Tattersall's.* A noted London sporting resort and auction mart for horses, established in 1766 by Richard Tattersall. English betting is regulated by the betting at Tattersall's.

expressed, but apparently very little regarded. Mr. Elliot had attempted no apology, and shown himself as unsolicitous of being longer noticed by the family as Sir Walter considered him unworthy of it; all acquaintance between them had ceased.

This very awkward history of Mr. Elliot was still, after an interval of several years, felt with anger by Elizabeth, who had liked the man for himself, and still more for being her father's heir, and whose strong family pride could see only in *him* a proper match for Sir Walter Elliot's eldest daughter. There was not a baronet from A to Z whom her feelings could have so willingly acknowledged as an equal. Yet so miserably had he conducted himself, that though she was at this present time (the summer of 1814) wearing black ribands for his wife, she could not admit him to be worth thinking of again. The disgrace of his first marriage might, perhaps, as there was no reason to suppose it perpetuated by offspring, have been got over had he not done worse; but he had, as by the accustomary intervention of kind friends they had been informed, spoken most disrespectfully of them all, — most slightingly and contemptuously of the very blood he belonged to, and the honors which were hereafter to be his own. This could not be pardoned.

Such were Elizabeth Elliot's sentiments and sensations; such the cares to alloy, the agitations to vary, the sameness and the elegance, the prosperity and the nothingness, of her scene of life, — such the feelings to give interest to a long, uneventful residence in one country circle, to fill the vacancies which there were no habits of utility abroad, no talents or accomplishments for home, to occupy.

But now another occupation and solicitude of mind was beginning to be added to these. Her father was growing distressed for money. She knew that when he now took up the *Baronetage* it was to drive the heavy bills of his tradespeople and the unwelcome hints of

Mr. Shepherd, his agent, from his thoughts. The Kellynch property was good, but not equal to Sir Walter's apprehension of the state required in its possessor. While Lady Elliot lived, there had been method, moderation, and economy, which had just kept him within his income; but with her had died all such right-mindedness, and from that period he had been constantly exceeding it. It had not been possible for him to spend less; he had done nothing but what Sir Walter Elliot was imperiously called on to do; but blameless as he was, he was not only growing dreadfully in debt, but was hearing of it so often that it became vain to attempt concealing it longer, even partially, from his daughter. He had given her some hints of it the last spring in town; he had gone so far even as to say, 'Can we retrench? Does it occur to you that there is any one article in which we can retrench?' — and Elizabeth, to do her justice, had, in the first ardor of female alarm, set seriously to think what could be done, and had finally proposed these two branches of economy, — to cut off some unnecessary charities, and to refrain from new furnishing the drawing-room; to which expedients she afterwards added the happy thought of their taking no present down to Anne, as had been the usual yearly custom. But these measures, however good in themselves, were insufficient for the real extent of the evil, the whole of which Sir Walter found himself obliged to confess to her soon afterwards. Elizabeth had nothing to propose of deeper efficacy. She felt herself ill-used and unfortunate, as did her father; and they were neither of them able to devise any means of lessening their expenses without compromising their dignity, or relinquishing their comforts in a way not to be borne.

There was only a small part of his estate that Sir Walter could dispose of; but had every acre been alienable, it would have made no difference. He had condescended to mortgage as far as he had the power, but

he would never condescend to sell. No, he would never disgrace his name so far. The Kellynch estate should be transmitted whole and entire, as he had received it.

Their two confidential friends, Mr. Shepherd, who lived in the neighboring market town, and Lady Russell, were called on to advise them; and both father and daughter seemed to expect that something should be struck out by one or the other to remove their embarrassments and reduce their expenditure without involving the loss of any indulgence of taste or pride.

[In the second chapter Lady Russell consults with Anne, and they both advise retrenchment; Sir Walter is indignant at this counsel, and decides to leave Kellynch Hall and live in Bath.]

CHAPTER III.

'I MUST take leave to observe, Sir Walter,' said Mr. Shepherd one morning at Kellynch Hall, as he laid down the newspaper, 'that the present juncture is much in our favor. This peace[1] will be turning all our rich naval officers ashore. They will be all wanting a home. Could not be a better time, Sir Walter, for having a choice of tenants, very responsible tenants. Many a noble fortune has been made during the war. If a rich admiral were to come in our way, Sir Walter —'

'He would be a very lucky man, Shepherd,' replied Sir Walter; 'that's all I have to remark. A prize indeed would Kellynch Hall be to him; rather the greatest prize of all, let him have taken ever so many before — hey, Shepherd?'

Mr. Shepherd laughed, as he knew he must, at this wit, and then added, —

[1] *This peace.* On March 31, 1814, the allied armies entered Paris, and on April 11, following, Napoleon signed the articles of abdication. Miss Austen's allusions to contemporary events are singularly few, and, like the present one, are of the briefest character.

'I presume to observe, Sir Walter, that, in the way of business, gentlemen of the navy are well to deal with. I have had a little knowledge of their methods of doing business, and I am free to confess that they have very liberal notions, and are as likely to make desirable tenants as any set of people one should meet with. Therefore, Sir Walter, what I would take leave to suggest is, that if in consequence of any rumors getting abroad of your intention — which must be contemplated as a possible thing, because we know how difficult it is to keep the actions and designs of one part of the world from the notice and curiosity of the other, — consequence has its tax — I, John Shepherd, might conceal any family matters that I choose, for nobody would think it worth their while to observe me; but Sir Walter Elliot has eyes upon him which it may be very difficult to elude; and therefore thus much I venture upon, that it will not greatly surprise me if, with all our caution, some rumor of the truth should get abroad; in the supposition of which, as I was going to observe, since applications will unquestionably follow, I should think any from our wealthy naval commanders particularly worth attending to; and beg leave to add that two hours will bring me over at any time, to save you the trouble of replying.'

Sir Walter only nodded. But soon afterwards, rising and pacing the room, he observed sarcastically, —

'There are few among the gentlemen of the navy, I imagine, who would not be surprised to find themselves in a house of this description.'

'They would look around them, no doubt, and bless their good fortune,' said Mrs. Clay, for Mrs. Clay was present; her father had driven her over, nothing being of so much use to Mrs. Clay's health as a drive to Kellynch; 'but I quite agree with my father in thinking a sailor might be a very desirable tenant. I have known a good deal of the profession, and, besides their liberality, they are so neat and careful in all their ways!

These valuable pictures of yours, Sir Walter, if you chose to leave them, would be perfectly safe. Everything in and about the house would be taken such excellent care of! The gardens and shrubberies would be kept in almost as high order as they are now. You need not be afraid, Miss Elliot, of your own sweet flower-garden's being neglected.'

'As to all that,' rejoined Sir Walter coolly, 'supposing I were induced to let my house, I have by no means made up my mind as to the privileges to be annexed to it. I am not particularly disposed to favor a tenant. The park would be open to him, of course, and few navy officers, or men of any other description, can have had such a range; but what restrictions I might impose on the use of the pleasure-grounds is another thing. I am not fond of the idea of my shrubberies being always approachable; and I should recommend Miss Elliot to be on her guard with respect to her flower-garden. I am very little disposed to grant a tenant of Kellynch Hall any extraordinary favor, I assure you, be he sailor or soldier.'

After a short pause, Mr. Shepherd presumed to say, —

'In all these cases there are established usages which make everything plain and easy between landlord and tenant. Your interest, Sir Walter, is in pretty safe hands. Depend upon me for taking care that no tenant has more than his just rights. I venture to hint that Sir Walter Elliot cannot be half so jealous for his own as John Shepherd will be for him.'

Here Anne spoke, —

'The navy, I think, who have done so much for us, have at least an equal claim with any other set of men for all the comforts and all the privileges which any home can give. Sailors work hard enough for their comforts, we must all allow.'

'Very true, very true. What Miss Anne says is very true,' was Mr. Shepherd's rejoinder, and 'Oh,

certainly,' was his daughter's; but Sir Walter's remark was soon afterwards, —

'The profession has its utility, but I should be sorry to see any friend of mine belonging to it.'

'Indeed!' was the reply, and with a look of surprise.

'Yes, it is in two points offensive to me; I have two strong grounds of objection to it. First, as being the means of bringing persons of obscure birth into undue distinction, and raising men to honors which their fathers and grandfathers never dreamed of; and secondly, as it cuts up a man's youth and vigor most horribly; a sailor grows old sooner than any other man; I have observed it all my life. A man is in greater danger in the navy of being insulted by the rise of one whose father his father might have disdained to speak to, and of becoming prematurely an object of disgust himself, than in any other line. One day last spring, in town, I was in company with two men, striking instances of what I am talking of, — Lord St. Ives, whose father we all know to have been a country curate, without bread to eat. I was to give place to Lord St. Ives, and a certain Admiral Baldwin, the most deplorable-looking personage you can imagine, his face the color of mahogany, rough and rugged to the last degree, all lines and wrinkles, nine gray hairs of a side, and nothing but a dab of powder at top. "In the name of Heaven, who is that old fellow?" said I to a friend of mine who was standing near (Sir Basil Morley). "Old fellow!" cried Sir Basil, "it is Admiral Baldwin. What do you take his age to be?" "Sixty," said I, "or perhaps sixty-two." "Forty," replied Sir Basil, "forty, and no more." Picture to yourselves my amazement: I shall not easily forget Admiral Baldwin. I never saw quite so wretched an example of what a seafaring life can do; but to a degree I know it is the same with them all; they are all knocked about, and exposed to every climate and every weather, till they are not fit to be seen. It

is a pity they are not knocked on the head at once, before they reach Admiral Baldwin's age.'

'Nay, Sir Walter,' cried Mrs. Clay, 'this is being severe indeed. Have a little mercy on the poor men. We are not all born to be handsome. The sea is no beautifier, certainly; sailors do grow old betimes, — I have often observed it, — they soon lose the look of youth. But then is not it the same with many other professions, perhaps most other? Soldiers in active service are not at all better off; and even in the quieter professions there is a toil and a labor of the mind, if not of the body, which seldom leaves a man's looks to the natural effect of time. The lawyer plods, quite careworn; the physician is up at all hours, and travelling in all weather; and even the clergyman' — she stopped a moment to consider what might do for the clergyman — 'and even the clergyman, you know, is obliged to go into infected rooms, and expose his health and looks to all the injury of a poisonous atmosphere. In fact, as I have long been convinced, though every profession is necessary and honorable in its turn, it is only the lot of those who are not obliged to follow any, — who can live in a regular way in the country, choosing their own hours, following their own pursuits, and living on their own property, without the torment of trying for more,—it is only *their* lot, I say, to hold the blessings of health and a good appearance to the utmost. I know no other set of men but what lose something of their personableness when they cease to be quite young.'

It seemed as if Mr. Shepherd, in this anxiety to bespeak Sir Walter's good-will towards a naval officer as tenant, had been gifted with foresight; for the very first application for the house was from an Admiral Croft, with whom he shortly afterwards fell into company in attending the quarter sessions at Taunton[1]; and,

[1] *Taunton.* A parliamentary and municipal borough of Somersetshire, with a population of nearly 17,000. It is a very old town, and was one of the residences of the West Saxon kings.

indeed, he had received a hint of the Admiral from a London correspondent. By the report which he hastened over to Kellynch to make, Admiral Croft was a native of Somersetshire, who, having acquired a very handsome fortune, was wishing to settle in his own county, and had come down to Taunton in order to look at some advertised places in that immediate neighborhood, which, however, had not suited him; that accidentally hearing — (it was just as he had foretold, Mr. Shepherd observed, Sir Walter's concerns could not be kept a secret) — accidentally hearing of the possibility of Kellynch Hall being to let, and understanding his (Mr. Shepherd's) connection with the owner, he had introduced himself to him in order to make particular inquiries, and had, in the course of a pretty long conference, expressed as strong an inclination for the place as a man who knew it only by description could feel, and given Mr. Shepherd, in his explicit account of himself, every proof of his being a most responsible, eligible tenant.

'And who is Admiral Croft?' was Sir Walter's cold, suspicious inquiry.

Mr. Shepherd answered for his being of a gentleman's family, and mentioned a place; and Anne, after the little pause which followed, added,—

'He is rear-admiral of the white. He was in the Trafalgar action, and has been in the East Indies since; he has been stationed there, I believe, several years.'

'Then I take it for granted,' observed Sir Walter, 'that his face is about as orange as the cuffs and capes of my livery.'

Mr. Shepherd hastened to assure him that Admiral Croft was a very hale, hearty, well-looking man, a little weather-beaten to be sure, but not much, and quite the gentleman in all his notions and behavior, — not likely to make the smallest difficulty about terms, — only wanted a comfortable home, and to get into it as soon as possible, — knew he must pay for his convenience, —

knew what rent a ready-furnished house of that consequence might fetch, — should not have been surprised if Sir Walter had asked more, — had inquired about the manor, — would be glad of the deputation, certainly, but made no great point of it, — said he sometimes took out a gun, but never killed, — quite the gentleman.

Mr. Shepherd was eloquent on the subject, pointing out all the circumstances of the Admiral's family, which made him peculiarly desirable as a tenant. He was a married man, and without children, — the very state to be wished for. A house was never taken good care of, Mr. Shepherd observed, without a lady: he did not know whether furniture might not be in danger of suffering as much where there was no lady, as where there were many children. A lady without a family was the very best preserver of furniture in the world. He had seen Mrs. Croft too; she was at Taunton with the Admiral, and had been present almost all the time they were talking the matter over.

'And a very well-spoken, genteel, shrewd lady she seemed to be,' continued he; 'asked more questions about the house, and terms, and taxes, than the Admiral himself, and seemed more conversant with business; and moreover, Sir Walter, I found she was not quite unconnected in this county any more than her husband; that is to say, she is sister to a gentleman who did live amongst us, — once she told me so herself, — sister to the gentleman who lived a few years back at Monkford. Bless me! what was his name? At this moment I cannot recollect his name, though I have heard it so lately. Penelope, my dear, can you help me to the name of the gentleman who lived at Monkford, — Mrs. Croft's brother?'

But Mrs. Clay was talking so eagerly with Miss Elliot that she did not hear the appeal.

'I have no conception whom you can mean, Shepherd; I remember no gentleman resident at Monkford since the time of old Governor Trent.'

'Bless me! how very odd! I shall forget my own name soon, I suppose. A name that I am so very well acquainted with; knew the gentleman so well by sight; seen him a hundred times; came to consult me once, I remember, about a trespass of one of his neighbors, — farmer's man breaking into his orchard, wall torn down, apples stolen, caught in the fact, — and afterwards, contrary to my judgment, submitted an amicable compromise. Very odd, indeed!'

After waiting another moment, —

'You mean Mr. Wentworth, I suppose?' said Anne. Mr. Shepherd was all gratitude.

'Wentworth was the very name! Mr. Wentworth was the very man. He had the curacy of Monkford, you know, Sir Walter, some time back, for two or three years. Came there about the year —5, I take it. You remember him, I am sure.'

'Wentworth? Oh ay, Mr. Wentworth, the curate of Monkford. You misled me by the term *gentleman*. I thought you were speaking of some man of property. Mr. Wentworth was nobody, I remember, — quite unconnected, nothing to do with the Strafford family. One wonders how the names of many of our nobility become so common.'

As Mr. Shepherd perceived that this connection of the Crofts did them no service with Sir Walter, he mentioned it no more, returning with all his zeal to dwell on the circumstances more indisputably in their favor, — their age, and number, and fortune, the high idea they had formed of Kellynch Hall, and extreme solicitude for the advantage of renting it, — making it appear as if they ranked nothing beyond the happiness of being the tenants of Sir Walter Elliot: an extraordinary taste certainly, could they have been supposed in the secret of Sir Walter's estimate of the dues of a tenant.

It succeeded, however; and though Sir Walter must ever look with an evil eye on any one intending to inhabit that house, and think them infinitely too well

off in being permitted to rent it on the highest terms, he was talked into allowing Mr. Shepherd to proceed in the treaty, and authorizing him to wait on Admiral Croft, who still remained at Taunton, and fix a day for the house being seen.

Sir Walter was not very wise; but still he had experience enough of the world to feel that a more unobjectionable tenant in all essentials than Admiral Croft bid fair to be could hardly offer. So far went his understanding; and his vanity supplied a little additional soothing, in the Admiral's situation in life, which was just high enough, and not too high. 'I have let my house to Admiral Croft,' would sound extremely well, very much better than to any mere *Mr.* ——; a *Mr.* (save, perhaps, some half-dozen in the nation) always needs a note of explanation. An admiral speaks his own consequence, and, at the same time, can never make a baronet look small. In all their dealings and intercourse Sir Walter Elliot must ever have precedence.

Nothing could be done without a reference to Elizabeth; but her inclination was growing so strong for a removal that she was happy to have it fixed and expedited by a tenant at hand, and not a word to suspend decision was uttered by her.

Mr. Shepherd was completely empowered to act; and no sooner had such an end been reached than Anne, who had been a most attentive listener to the whole, left the room, to seek the comfort of cool air for her flushed cheeks; and as she walked along a favorite grove said, with a gentle sigh, 'A few months more, and *he*,[1] perhaps, may be walking here.'

[1] Frederick Wentworth, the former lover of Anne Elliot.

[Chapters IV. to X., inclusive, detail the early romance of Anne Elliot's life; the coming of the Crofts to Kellynch; the visit of Anne to her sister Mary at Uppercross, and the meeting of Anne and Captain Wentworth at Uppercross, where the Captain becomes intimate with the Musgroves.]

CHAPTER XI.

THE time now approached for Lady Russell's return; the day was even fixed; and Anne, being engaged to join her as soon as she was resettled, was looking forward to an early removal to Kellynch, and beginning to think how her own comfort was likely to be affected by it.

It would place her in the same village with Captain Wentworth, within half a mile of him; they would have to frequent the same church, and there must be intercourse between the two families. This was against her; but, on the other hand, he spent so much of his time at Uppercross, that in removing thence she might be considered rather as leaving him behind than as going towards him; and, upon the whole, she believed she must on this interesting question be the gainer, almost as certainly as in her change of domestic society, in leaving poor Mary for Lady Russell.

She wished it might be possible for her to avoid ever seeing Captain Wentworth at the hall; those rooms had witnessed former meetings which would be brought too painfully before her; but she was yet more anxious for the possibility of Lady Russell and Captain Wentworth never meeting anywhere. They did not like each other, and no renewal of acquaintance now could do any good; and were Lady Russell to see them together, she might think that he had too much self-possession and she too little.

These points formed her chief solicitude in anticipating her removal from Uppercross, where she felt she had been stationed quite long enough. Her usefulness to little Charles would always give some sweetness to the memory of her two months' visit there; but he was gaining strength apace, and she had nothing else to stay for.

The conclusion of her visit, however, was diversified in a way which she had not at all imagined. Captain Wentworth, after being unseen and unheard of at Uppercross for two whole days, appeared again among them to justify himself by a relation of what had kept him away.

A letter from his friend Captain Harville, having found him out at last, had brought intelligence of Captain Harville's being settled with his family at Lyme[1] for the winter; of their being, therefore, quite unknowingly, within twenty miles of each other. Captain Harville had never been in good health since a severe wound which he received two years before, and Captain Wentworth's anxiety to see him had determined him to go immediately to Lyme. He had been there for four-and-twenty hours. His acquittal was complete, his friendship warmly honored, a lively interest excited for his friend; and his description of the fine country about Lyme so feelingly attended to by the party, that an earnest desire to see Lyme themselves, and a project for going thither, was the consequence.

The young people were all wild to see Lyme. Captain Wentworth talked of going there again himself; it was only seventeen miles from Uppercross; though November, the weather was by no means bad; and, in short, Louisa, who was the most eager of the eager, having formed the resolution to go, and besides the pleasure of doing as she liked being now armed with the idea of merit in maintaining her own way, bore down all the wishes of her father and mother for putting it off till summer; and to Lyme they were to go,— Charles, Mary, Anne, Henrietta, Louisa, and Captain Wentworth.

The first heedless scheme had been to go in the morning and return at night, but to this Mr. Musgrove, for the sake of his horses, would not consent; and

[1] *Lyme*, or more properly Lyme Regis, a small Dorsetshire seaport, built between two chalk hills at the mouth of the river Lyme.

when it came to be rationally considered, a day in the middle of November would not leave much time for seeing a new place, after deducting seven hours, as the nature of the country required, for going and returning. They were, consequently, to stay the night there, and not to be expected back till the next day's dinner. This was felt to be a considerable amendment; and though they all met at the Great House at rather an early breakfast hour, and set off very punctually, it was so much past noon before the two carriages — Mr. Musgrove's coach, containing the four ladies, and Charles's curricle, in which he drove Captain Wentworth — were descending the long hill into Lyme, and entering upon the still steeper street of the town itself, that it was very evident they would not have more than time for looking about them before the light and warmth of the day were gone.

After securing accommodations and ordering a dinner at one of the inns, the next thing to be done was unquestionably to walk directly down to the sea. They were come too late in the year for any amusement of variety which Lyme as a public place might offer; the rooms were shut up, the lodgers almost all gone, scarcely any family but of the residents left. And as there is nothing to admire in the buildings themselves, the remarkable situation of the town, the principal street almost hurrying into the water, the walk to the Cobb,[1] skirting round the pleasant little bay, which in the season is animated with bathing-machines and company,

[1] *Cobb.* A breakwater, first constructed in the reign of Edward III. It was of wooden piles, renewed as often as destroyed, till the time of James I., when it was rebuilt of stone. It is nearly 700 feet long, and at the time of Miss Austen's visit to Lyme, in 1804, consisted of an upper end, some 500 feet in length, built in 1792, and a lower end, more than a hundred years older. A single flight of steep steps then connected the two parts of the Cobb. In 1824 a severe storm demolished all that part built previously to 1792. This portion has since been rebuilt, and a double flight of steps now joins the two.

the Cobb itself, its old wonders and new improvements, with the very beautiful line of cliffs stretching out to the east of the town, are what the stranger's eye will seek; and a very strange stranger it must be who does not see charms in the immediate environs of Lyme to make him wish to know it better. The scenes in its neighborhood,—Charmouth,[1] with its high grounds and extensive sweeps of country, and still more its sweet retired bay, backed by dark cliffs, where fragments of low rock among the sand make it the happiest spot for watching the flow of the tide, for sitting in unwearied contemplation; the woody varieties of the cheerful village of Up Lyme;[2] and, above all, Pinny,[3] with its green chasms between romantic rocks, where the scattered forest trees and orchards of luxuriant growth declare that many a generation must have passed away since the first partial falling of the cliff prepared the ground for such a state, where a scene so wonderful and so lovely is exhibited as may more than equal any of the resembling scenes of the far-famed Isle of Wight;—these places must be visited, and visited again, to make the worth of Lyme understood.[4]

The party from Uppercross, passing down by the now deserted and melancholy looking rooms, and still de-

[1] *Charmouth.* A small Dorsetshire watering-place at the mouth of the river Char.

[2] *Up Lyme.* A small village a mile or two northwest of Lyme Regis.

[3] *Pinny.* The reference is to the Pinner Cliffs, between Lyme Regis and Axmouth. Many land-slides have occurred here, one of the most noted being that of 1839, which left a chasm a mile long, 200 feet wide, and 250 feet deep.

[4] It will be noted that while Miss Austen rarely undertook to portray scenery, she was by no means indifferent to the charms of a landscape, and could, if necessary, describe one with almost photographic accuracy, as in the present instance. But the thread of the story is never broken in order to present a passage of this sort. Such descriptions are made an essential part of the narrative; they are explanatory and illustrative in character, and not an external feature of it.

scending, soon found themselves on the sea-shore, and lingering only, as all must linger and gaze on the first return to the sea who ever deserve to look on it at all, proceeded towards the Cobb, equally their object in itself and on Captain Wentworth's account; for in a small house, near the foot of an old pier of unknown date, were the Harvilles settled. Captain Wentworth turned in to call on his friend; the others walked on, and he was to join them on the Cobb.

They were by no means tired of wondering and admiring; and not even Louisa seemed to feel that they had parted with Captain Wentworth long, when they saw him coming after them with three companions, all well known already by description to be Captain and Mrs. Harville, and a Captain Benwick, who was staying with them.

Captain Benwick had some time ago been first lieutenant of the *Laconia*, and the account which Captain Wentworth had given of him on his return from Lyme before, his warm praise of him as an excellent young man and an officer whom he had always valued highly, which must have stamped him well in the esteem of every listener, had been followed by a little history of his private life, which rendered him perfectly interesting in the eyes of all the ladies. He had been engaged to Captain Harville's sister, and was now mourning her loss. They had been a year or two waiting for fortune and promotion. Fortune came, his prize-money as lieutenant being great; promotion, too, came at *last;* but Fanny Harville did not live to know it. She had died the preceding summer while he was at sea. Captain Wentworth believed it impossible for man to be more attached to woman than poor Benwick had been to Fanny Harville, or be more deeply afflicted under the dreadful change. He considered his disposition as of the sort which must suffer heavily, uniting very strong feelings with quiet, serious, and retiring manners, and a decided taste for reading and sedentary pursuits. To

finish the interest of the story, the friendship between him and the Harvilles seemed, if possible, augmented by the event which closed all their views of alliance, and Captain Benwick was now living with them entirely. Captain Harville had taken his present house for half a year, his taste, and his health, and his fortune, all directing him to a residence inexpensive, and by the sea; and the grandeur of the country, and the retirement of Lyme in the winter, appeared exactly adapted to Captain Benwick's state of mind. The sympathy and good will excited towards Captain Benwick was very great.

'And yet,' said Anne to herself, as they now moved forward to meet the party, 'he has not, perhaps, a more sorrowing heart than I have. I cannot believe his prospects so blighted forever. He is younger than I am; younger in feeling, if not in fact; younger as a man. He will rally again, and be happy with another.'

They all met, and were introduced. Captain Harville was a tall, dark man, with a sensible, benevolent countenance; a little lame; and, from strong features and want of health, looking much older than Captain Wentworth. Captain Benwick looked, and was, the youngest of the three, and, compared with either of them, a little man. He had a pleasing face and a melancholy air, just as he ought to have, and drew back from conversation.

Captain Harville, though not equalling Captain Wentworth in manners, was a perfect gentleman, unaffected, warm, and obliging. Mrs. Harville, a degree less polished than her husband, seemed however to have the same good feelings; and nothing could be more pleasant than their desire of considering the whole party as friends of their own, because the friends of Captain Wentworth, or more kindly hospitable than their entreaties for their all promising to dine with them. The dinner already ordered at the inn was at last, though unwillingly, accepted as an excuse; but they seemed

almost hurt that Captain Wentworth should have brought any such party to Lyme, without considering it as a thing of course that they should dine with them.

There was so much attachment to Captain Wentworth in all this, and such a bewitching charm in a degree of hospitality so uncommon, so unlike the usual style of give-and-take invitations, and dinners of formality and display, that Anne felt her spirits not likely to be benefited by an increasing acquaintance among his brother officers. 'These would have been all my friends,' was her thought; and she had to struggle against a great tendency to lowness.[1]

On quitting the Cobb, they all went in-doors with their new friends, and found rooms so small as none but those who invite from the heart could think capable of accommodating so many. Anne had a moment's astonishment on the subject herself; but it was soon lost in the pleasanter feelings which sprang from the sight of all the ingenious contrivances and nice arrangements of Captain Harville to turn the actual space to the best possible account, to supply the deficiencies of lodging-house furniture, and defend the windows and doors against the winter storms to be expected. The varieties in the fitting-up of the rooms, where the common necessaries provided by the owner, in the common indifferent plight, were contrasted with some few articles of a rare species of wood, excellently worked up, and with something curious and valuable from all the distant countries Captain Harville had visited, were more than amusing to Anne; connected as it all was with his profession, the fruit of its labors, the effect of its influence on his habits, the picture of repose and domestic happiness it presented, made it to her a something more or less than gratification.

Captain Harville was no reader; but he had contrived excellent accommodations, and fashioned very pretty

[1] *Lowness.* A term once in frequent use to signify depression, a meaning but seldom attached to the word at present.

shelves, for a tolerable collection of well-bound volumes, the property of Captain Benwick. His lameness prevented him from taking much exercise; but a mind of usefulness and ingenuity seemed to furnish him with constant employment within. He drew, he varnished, he carpentered, he glued; he made toys for the children; he fashioned new netting-needles and pins with improvements; and if everything else was done, sat down to his large fishing-net at one corner of the room. Anne thought she left great happiness behind her when they quitted the house; and Louisa, by whom she found herself walking, burst forth into raptures of admiration and delight on the character of the navy, — their friendliness, their brotherliness, their openness, their uprightness; protesting that she was convinced of sailors having more worth and warmth than any other set of men in England; that they only knew how to live, and they only deserved to be respected and loved.[1]

They went back to dress and dine; and so well had the scheme answered already, that nothing was found amiss; though its being 'so entirely out of the season,' and the 'no thoroughfare of Lyme,' and the 'no expectation of company,' had brought many apologies from the heads of the inn.

Anne found herself by this time growing so much more hardened to being in Captain Wentworth's company than she had at first imagined could ever be, that the sitting down to the same table with him now, and the interchange of the common civilities attending on it (they never got beyond), was become a mere nothing.

The nights were too dark for the ladies to meet again till the morrow, but Captain Harville had promised them a visit in the evening; and he came, bringing his

[1] Two of Miss Austen's brothers were in the navy, which in some measure accounts for her enthusiasm in regard to that profession, for it is very evident that Louisa Musgrove is here uttering only the sincere convictions of Jane Austen.

friend also, which was more than had been expected, it having been agreed that Captain Benwick had all the appearance of being oppressed by the presence of so many strangers. He ventured among them again, however, though his spirits certainly did not seem fit for the mirth of the party in general.

While Captain Wentworth and Harville led the talk on one side of the room, and, by recurring to former days, supplied anecdotes in abundance to occupy and entertain the others, it fell to Anne's lot to be placed rather apart with Captain Benwick; and a very good impulse of her nature obliged her to begin an acquaintance with him. He was shy, and disposed to abstraction; but the engaging mildness of her countenance, and gentleness of her manners, soon had their effect, and Anne was well repaid the first trouble of exertion. He was evidently a young man of considerable taste in reading, though principally in poetry; and besides the persuasion of having given him at least an evening's indulgence in the discussion of subjects, which his usual companions had probably no concern in, she had the hope of being of real use to him in some suggestions as to the duty and benefit of struggling against affliction, which had naturally grown out of their conversation. For though shy, he did not seem reserved; it had rather the appearance of feelings glad to burst their usual restraints; and having talked of poetry, the richness of the present age, and gone through a brief comparison of opinion as to the first-rate poets, trying to ascertain whether *Marmion* or *The Lady of the Lake* were to be preferred, and how ranked the *Giaour* and *The Bride of Abydos*, and moreover, how the *Giaour* was to be pronounced, he showed himself so intimately acquainted with all the tenderest songs of the one poet, and all the impassioned descriptions of hopeless agony of the other; he repeated with such tremulous feeling the various lines which imaged a broken heart, or a mind destroyed by wretchedness, and looked so entirely as if

he meant to be understood, that she ventured to hope he did not always read only poetry; and to say that she thought it was the misfortune of poetry to be seldom safely enjoyed by those who enjoyed it completely; and that the strong feelings which alone could estimate it truly were the very feelings which ought to taste it but sparingly.

His looks showing him not pained, but pleased with this allusion to his situation, she was emboldened to go on; and feeling in herself the right of seniority of mind, she ventured to recommend a larger allowance of prose in his daily study; and on being requested to particularize, mentioned such works of our best moralists, such collections of the finest letters, such memoirs of characters of worth and suffering, as occurred to her at the moment as calculated to rouse and fortify the mind by the highest precepts, and the strongest examples of moral and religious endurances.

Captain Benwick listened attentively, and seemed grateful for the interest implied; and though with a shake of the head, and sighs which declared his little faith in the efficacy of any books on grief like his, noted down the names of those she recommended, and promised to procure and read them.

When the evening was over, Anne could not but be amused at the idea of her coming to Lyme, to preach patience and resignation to a young man whom she had never seen before; nor could she help fearing, on more serious reflection, that, like many other great moralists and preachers, she had been eloquent on a point in which her own conduct would ill bear examination.

CHAPTER XII.

Anne and Henrietta, finding themselves the earliest of the party the next morning, agreed to stroll down to the sea before breakfast. They went to the sands,

to watch the flowing of the tide, which a fine southeasterly[1] breeze was bringing in with all the grandeur which so flat a shore admitted. They praised the morning; gloried in the sea; sympathized in the delight of the fresh-feeling breeze — and were silent; till Henrietta suddenly began again, with —

'Oh yes, — I am quite convinced that, with very few exceptions, the sea air always does good. There can be no doubt of its having been of the greatest service to Dr. Shirley, after his illness, last spring twelvemonth. He declares himself, that coming to Lyme for a month did him more good than all the medicine he took; and that being by the sea always makes him feel young again. Now I cannot help thinking it a pity that he does not live entirely by the sea. I do think he had better leave Uppercross entirely, and fix at Lyme. Do not you, Anne? Do not you agree with me, that it is the best thing he could do, both for himself and Mrs. Shirley? She has cousins here, you know, and many acquaintances, which would make it cheerful for her, — and I am sure she would be glad to get to a place where she could have medical attendance at hand, in case of his having another seizure. Indeed, I think it quite melancholy to have such excellent people as Dr. and Mrs. Shirley, who have been doing good all their lives, wearing out their last days in a place like Uppercross, where, excepting our family, they seem shut out from all the world. I wish his friends would propose it to him. I really think they ought. And as to procuring a dispensation, there could be no difficulty at his time of life, and with his character. My only doubt is, whether anything could persuade him to leave his parish. He is so very strict and scrupulous in his notions; over-scrupulous, I must say. Do not you think, Anne, it is being over-scrupulous? Do not you think it is quite a

[1] Miss Austen's accuracy of statement is here shown in the fact that the sands are open *only* to southern breezes, especially to those from the southeast.

mistaken point of conscience, when a clergyman sacrifices his health for the sake of duties which may be just as well performed by another person? And at Lyme, too, — only seventeen miles off, — he would be near enough to hear, if people thought there was anything to complain of.'

Anne smiled more than once to herself during this speech, and entered into the subject, as ready to do good by entering into the feelings of a young lady as of a young man, — though here it was good of a lower standard, for what could be offered but general acquiescence? She said all that was reasonable and proper on the business; felt the claims of Dr. Shirley to repose as she ought; saw how very desirable it was that he should have some active, respectable young man as a resident curate, and was even courteous enough to hint at the advantage of such resident curate's being married.

'I wish,' said Henrietta, very well pleased with her companion, 'I wish Lady Russell lived at Uppercross, and were intimate with Dr. Shirley. I have always heard of Lady Russell as a woman of the greatest influence with everybody! I always look upon her as able to persuade a person to anything! I am afraid of her, as I have told you before, quite afraid of her, because she is so very clever; but I respect her amazingly, and wish we had such a neighbor at Uppercross.'

Anne was amused by Henrietta's manner of being grateful, and amused also that the course of events and the new interests of Henrietta's views should have placed her friend at all in favor with any of the Musgrove family; she had only time, however, for a general answer, and a wish that such another woman were at Uppercross, before all subjects suddenly ceased, on seeing Louisa and Captain Wentworth coming towards them. They came also for a stroll till breakfast was likely to be ready; but Louisa, recollecting immediately afterwards that she had something to procure at a

shop, invited them all to go back with her into the town. They were all at her disposal.

When they came to the steps leading upwards from the beach, a gentleman, at the same moment preparing to come down, politely drew back, and stopped to give them way. They ascended and passed him; and as they passed, Anne's face caught his eye, and he looked at her with a degree of earnest admiration which she could not be insensible of. She was looking remarkably well; her very regular, very pretty features, having the bloom and freshness of youth restored by the fine wind which had been blowing on her complexion, and by the animation of eye which it had also produced. It was evident that the gentleman (completely a gentleman in manner) admired her exceedingly. Captain Wentworth looked round at her instantly in a way which showed his noticing of it. He gave her a momentary glance, — a glance of brightness, which seemed to say, 'That man is struck with you, — and even I, at this moment, see something like Anne Elliot again.'

After attending Louisa through her business, and loitering about a little longer, they returned to the inn; and Anne, in passing afterwards quickly from her own chamber to their dining-room, had nearly run against the very same gentleman, as he came out of an adjoining apartment. She had before conjectured him to be a stranger, like themselves, and determined that a well-looking groom, who was strolling about near the two inns as they came back, should be his servant. Both master and man being in mourning assisted the idea. It was now proved that he belonged to the same inn as themselves: and this second meeting, short as it was, also proved again, by the gentleman's looks, that he thought hers very lovely, and by the readiness and propriety of his apologies, that he was a man of exceedingly good manners. He seemed about thirty, and, though not handsome, had an agreeable person. Anne felt that she should like to know who he was.

They had nearly done breakfast, when the sound of a carriage (almost the first they had heard since entering Lyme) drew half the party to the window. 'It was a gentleman's carriage, — a curricle, —but only coming round from the stable-yard to the front door; somebody must be going away. It was driven by a servant in mourning.'

The word 'curricle' made Charles Musgrove jump up, that he might compare it with his own; the servant in mourning roused Anne's curiosity; and the whole six were collected to look, by the time the owner of the curricle was to be seen issuing from the door, amidst the bows and civilities of the household, and taking his seat to drive off.

'Ah!' cried Captain Wentworth, instantly, and with half a glance at Anne; 'it is the very man we passed.'

The Miss Musgroves agreed to it; and having all kindly watched him as far up the hill as they could, they returned to the breakfast-table. The waiter came into the room soon afterwards.

'Pray,' said Captain Wentworth, immediately, 'can you tell us the name of the gentleman who is just gone away?'

'Yes, sir, a Mr. Elliot; a gentleman of large fortune, came in last night from Sidmouth,[1] — dare say you heard the carriage, sir, while you were at dinner; and going on now for Crewkherne,[2] on his way to Bath and London.'

'Elliot!' Many had looked on each other, and many had repeated the name, before all this had been got through, even by the smart rapidity of a waiter.

[1] *Sidmouth.* A market town in Devonshire, with a population of between three and four thousand. It is fifteen miles southeast of Exeter, and in the early part of the nineteenth century was an important seaside resort.

[2] *Crewkherne* (The Place of the Cross). A market town in Somersetshire about fifteen miles from Taunton. It has a population of five thousand.

'Bless me!' cried Mary, 'it must be our cousin; it must be our Mr. Elliot, it must indeed! Charles, Anne, must not it? In mourning, you see, just as our Mr. Elliot must be. How very extraordinary! In the very same inn with us! Anne, must not it be our Mr. Elliot, my father's next heir? Pray, sir,' turning to the waiter, 'did not you hear — did not his servant say whether he belonged to the Kellynch family?'

'No, ma'am, he did not mention no particular family; but he said his master was a very rich gentleman, and would be a baronight some day.'[1]

'There! you see!' cried Mary, in an ecstasy; 'just as I said! Heir to Sir Walter Elliot! I was sure that would come out, if it was so. Depend upon it, that is a circumstance which his servants take care to publish wherever he goes. But, Anne, only conceive how extraordinary! I wish I had looked at him more. I wish we had been aware in time who it was, that he might have been introduced to us. What a pity that we should not have been introduced to each other! Do you think he had the Elliot countenance? I hardly looked at him, I was looking at the horses; but I think he had something of the Elliot countenance. I wonder the arms did not strike me! Oh, the great-coat was hanging over the panel, and hid the arms; so it did, otherwise, I am sure, I should have observed them, and the livery too; if the servant had not been in mourning, one should have known him by the livery.'

'Putting all these very extraordinary circumstances together,' said Captain Wentworth, 'we must consider it to be the arrangement of Providence that you should not be introduced to your cousin.'

When she could command Mary's attention, Anne

[1] The allusions to servants in Miss Austen's novels are comparatively few, but they are of such a nature as to lead one to believe that she could have drawn very entertaining characters of the kind, had she so chosen. Such outline sketches of servants as she does give us are very clear and distinct.

quietly tried to convince her that their father and Mr. Elliot had not for many years been on such terms as to make the power of attempting an introduction at all desirable.

At the same time, however. it was a secret gratification to herself to have seen her cousin, and to know that the future owner of Kellynch was undoubtedly a gentleman, and had an air of good sense. She would not, upon any account, mention her having met with him the second time; luckily, Mary did not much attend to their having passed close by him in their early walk, but she would have felt quite ill-used by Anne's having actually run against him in the passage, and received his very polite excuses, while she had never been near him at all; no, that cousinly little interview must remain a perfect secret.

'Of course,' said Mary, 'you will mention our seeing Mr. Elliot the next time you write to Bath. I think my father certainly ought to hear of it; do mention all about him.'

Anne avoided a direct reply, but it was just the circumstance which she considered as not merely unnecessary to be communicated, but as what ought to be suppressed. The offence which had been given her father many years back she knew, Elizabeth's particular share in it she suspected; and that Mr. Elliot's idea always produced irritation in both was beyond a doubt. Mary never wrote to Bath herself; all the toil of keeping up a slow and unsatisfactory correspondence with Elizabeth fell on Anne.

Breakfast had not been long over when they were joined by Captain and Mrs. Harville and Captain Benwick, with whom they had appointed to take their last walk about Lyme. They ought to be setting off for Uppercross by one, and in the mean while were to be all together, and out of doors as long as they could.

Anne found Captain Benwick getting near her, as soon as they were all fairly in the street. Their con-

versation the preceding evening did not disincline him to seek her again; and they walked together some time, talking as before of Mr. Scott and Lord Byron, and still as unable as before, and as unable as any other two readers, to think exactly alike of the merits of either, till something occasioned an almost general change amongst their party, and instead of Captain Benwick, she had Captain Harville by her side.

'Miss Elliot,' said he, speaking rather low, 'you have done a good deed in making that poor fellow talk so much. I wish he could have such company oftener. It is bad for him, I know, to be shut up as he is; but what can we do? we cannot part.'

'No,' said Anne, 'that I can easily believe to be impossible: but in time, perhaps — we know what time does in every case of affliction, and you must remember, Captain Harville, that your friend may yet be called a young mourner, — only last summer, I understand.'

'Ay, true enough,' with a deep sigh, 'only June.'

'And not known to him, perhaps, so soon.'

'Not till the first week in August, when he came home from the Cape, — just made into the *Grappler*. I was at Plymouth, dreading to hear of him: he sent in letters, but the *Grappler* was under orders for Portsmouth. There the news must follow him: but who was to tell it? not I. I would as soon have been run up to the yard-arm. Nobody could do it but that good fellow (pointing to Captain Wentworth). The *Laconia* had come into Plymouth the week before; no danger of her being sent to sea again. He stood his chance for the rest, — wrote up for leave of absence; but without waiting the return, travelled night and day till he got to Portsmouth, rowed off to the *Grappler* that instant, and never left the poor fellow for a week; that's what he did, and nobody else could have saved poor James. You may think, Miss Elliot, whether he is dear to us!'

Anne did think on the question with perfect decision, and said as much in reply as her own feelings could

accomplish, or as his seemed able to bear, for he was too much affected to renew the subject, — and when he spoke again, it was of something totally different.

Mrs. Harville's giving it as her opinion that her husband would have quite walking enough by the time he reached home, determined the direction of all the party in what was to be their last walk: they would accompany them to their door, and then return and set off themselves. By all their calculations there was just time for this; but as they drew near the Cobb, there was such a general wish to walk along it once more, all were so inclined, and Louisa soon grew so determined, that the difference of a quarter of an hour, it was found, would be no difference at all; so with all the kind leave-taking, and all the kind interchange of invitations and promises which may be imagined, they parted from Captain and Mrs. Harville at their own door, and still accompanied by Captain Benwick, who seemed to cling to them to the last, proceeded to make the proper adieus to the Cobb.

Anne found Captain Benwick again drawing near her. Lord Byron's 'dark blue seas' could not fail of being brought forward by their present view, and she gladly gave him all her attention as long as attention was possible. It was soon drawn, perforce, another way.

There was too much wind to make the high part of the new[1] Cobb pleasant for the ladies, and they agreed to get down the steps to the lower, and all were content to pass quietly and carefully down the steep flight, excepting Louisa; she must be jumped down them by Captain Wentworth. In all their walks he had to jump her from the stiles; the sensation was delightful to her. The hardness of the pavement for her feet made him less willing upon the present occasion; he did it, however; she was safely down, and instantly, to show her

[1] *New Cobb.* The upper portion, or that built in 1792.

enjoyment, ran up the steps to be jumped down again. He advised her against it, thought the jar too great; but no, he reasoned and talked in vain: she smiled and said, 'I am determined I will:' he put out his hands; she was too precipitate by half a second, she fell on the pavement on the Lower Cobb, and was taken up lifeless![1]

There was no wound, no blood, no visible bruise; but her eyes were closed, she breathed not, her face was like death. The horror of that moment to all who stood around!

Captain Wentworth. who had caught her up, knelt with her in his arms, looking on her, with a face as pallid as her own, in an agony of silence. 'She is dead! she is dead!' screamed Mary, catching hold of her husband, and contributing, with his own horror, to make him immovable; and in another moment, Henrietta, sinking under the conviction, lost her senses too, and would have fallen on the steps but for Captain Benwick and Anne, who caught and supported her between them.

'Is there no one to help me?' were the first words which burst from Captain Wentworth, in a tone of despair, and as if all his own strength were gone.

'Go to him, go to him,' cried Anne, 'for Heaven's sake go to him! I can support her myself. Leave me, and go to him. Rub her hands, rub her temples; here are salts, — take them, take them!'

Captain Benwick obeyed, and Charles at the same moment disengaging himself from his wife, they were both with him; and Louisa was raised up and supported more firmly between them, and everything was done

[1] When Lord Tennyson visited Lyme Regis his friends wished him to see where the Duke of Monmouth landed; but much to their surprise, the poet exclaimed with indignation: 'Don't talk to me of the Duke of Monmouth. Show me that precise spot where Louisa Musgrove fell.' The 'precise spot' must undoubtedly be at the foot of the present double flight of steps which replaces the 'steep flight' that Miss Austen knew.

that Anne had prompted, but in vain; while Captain Wentworth, staggering against the wall for his support, exclaimed in the bitterest agony, —

'O God! her father and mother!'

'A surgeon!' said Anne.

He caught the word: it seemed to rouse him at once; and saying only, 'True, true, a surgeon this instant,' was darting away, when Anne eagerly suggested, —

'Captain Benwick; would not it be better for Captain Benwick? He knows where a surgeon is to be found.'

Every one capable of thinking felt the advantage of the idea, and in a moment (it was all done in rapid moments) Captain Benwick had resigned the poor corpse-like figure entirely to the brother's care, and was off for the town with the utmost rapidity.

As to the wretched party left behind, it could scarcely be said which of the three, who were completely rational, was suffering most, Captain Wentworth, Anne, or Charles, who, really a very affectionate brother, hung over Louisa with sobs of grief, and could only turn his eyes from one sister to see the other in a state as insensible, or to witness the hysterical agitations of his wife, calling on him for help which he could not give.

Anne, attending with all the strength and zeal and thought which instinct supplied, to Henrietta, still tried, at intervals, to suggest comfort to the others, tried to quiet Mary, to animate Charles, to assuage the feelings of Captain Wentworth. Both seemed to look to her for directions.[1]

'Anne, Anne,' cried Charles, 'what is to be done next? What, in Heaven's name, is to be done next?'

Captain Wentworth's eyes were also turned towards her.

[1] 'The manner in which the set-aside, quiet woman, who has yet so much more strength and power of resource than the others, comes to the front whether she will or no, in the moment of trouble, is fine, and true to nature.' — Miss Keddie.

'Had not she better be carried to the inn? Yes, I am sure, carry her gently to the inn.'

'Yes, yes, to the inn,' repeated Captain Wentworth, comparatively collected, and eager to be doing something. 'I will carry her myself. Musgrove, take care of the others.'

By this time the report of the accident had spread among the workmen and boatmen about the Cobb, and many were collected near them, to be useful if wanted; at any rate, to enjoy the sight of a dead young lady, nay, two dead young ladies, for it proved twice as fine as the first report. To some of the best-looking of these good people Henrietta was consigned, for, though partially revived, she was quite helpless; and in this manner, Anne walking by her side, and Charles attending to his wife, they set forward, treading back, with feelings unutterable, the ground which so lately, so very lately, and so light of heart, they had passed along.

They were not off the Cobb before the Harvilles met them. Captain Benwick had been seen flying by their house, with a countenance which showed something to be wrong; and they had set off immediately, informed and directed, as they passed, towards the spot. Shocked as Captain Harville was, he brought senses and nerves that could be instantly useful; and a look between him and his wife decided what was to be done. She must be taken to their house — all must go to their house — and wait the surgeon's arrival there. They would not listen to scruples: he was obeyed: they were all beneath his roof; and while Louisa, under Mrs. Harville's direction, was conveyed upstairs, and given possession of her own bed, assistance, cordials, restoratives were supplied by her husband to all who needed them.

Louisa had once opened her eyes, but soon closed them again, without apparent consciousness. This had been a proof of life, however, of service to her sister; and Henrietta, though perfectly incapable of being in

the same room with Louisa, was kept, by the agitation of hope and fear, from a return of her own insensibility. Mary, too, was growing calmer.

The surgeon was with them almost before it had seemed possible. They were sick with horror while he examined; but he was not hopeless. The head had received a severe contusion, but he had seen greater injuries recovered from: he was by no means hopeless; he spoke cheerfully.

That he did not regard it as a desperate case — that he did not say a few hours must end it — was at first felt beyond the hope of most; and the ecstasy of such a reprieve, the rejoicing, deep and silent, after a few fervent ejaculations of gratitude to Heaven had been offered, may be conceived.

The tone, the look, with which 'Thank God!' was uttered by Captain Wentworth, Anne was sure could never be forgotten by her; nor the sight of him afterwards, as he sat near a table, leaning over it with folded arms, and face concealed, as if overpowered by the various feelings of his soul, and trying by prayer and reflection to calm them.

Louisa's limbs had escaped. There was no injury but to the head.

It now became necessary for the party to consider what was best to be done as to their general situation. They were now able to speak to each other, and consult. That Louisa must remain where she was, however distressing to her friends to be involving the Harvilles in such trouble, did not admit a doubt. Her removal was impossible. The Harvilles silenced all scruples, and, as much as they could, all gratitude. They had looked forward and arranged everything, before the others began to reflect. Captain Benwick must give up his room to them, and get a bed elsewhere; and the whole was settled. They were only concerned that the house could accommodate no more; and yet, perhaps, by 'putting the children away in the maid's room, or swinging

a cot somewhere,' they could hardly bear to think of not finding room for two or three besides, supposing they might wish to stay; though, with regard to any attendance on Miss Musgrove, there need not be the least uneasiness in leaving her to Mrs. Harville's care entirely. Mrs. Harville was a very experienced nurse; and her nursery-maid, who had lived with her long, and gone about with her everywhere, was just such another. Between these two she could want no possible attendance by day or night. And all this was said with a truth and sincerity of feeling irresistible.

Charles, Henrietta, and Captain Wentworth were the three in consultation, and for a little while it was only an interchange of perplexity and terror. 'Uppercross, — the necessity of some one's going to Uppercross, — the news to be conveyed, — how it could be broken to Mr. and Mrs. Musgrove, — the lateness of the morning, — an hour already gone since they ought to have been off, — the impossibility of being in tolerable time.' At first, they were capable of nothing more to the purpose than such exclamations; but after a while Captain Wentworth, exerting himself, said, —

'We must be decided, and without the loss of another minute. Every minute is valuable. Some one must resolve on being off for Uppercross instantly. Musgrove, either you or I must go.'

Charles agreed, but declared his resolution of not going away. He would be as little encumbrance as possible to Captain and Mrs. Harville; but as to leaving his sister in such a state, he neither ought nor would. So far it was decided; and Henrietta at first declared the same. She, however, was soon persuaded to think differently. The usefulness of her staying, — she, who had not been able to remain in Louisa's room, or to look at her, without sufferings which made her worse than helpless! She was forced to acknowledge that she could do no good, yet was still unwilling to be away, till, touched by the thought of her father and

mother, she gave it up; she consented, she was anxious to be at home.

The plan had reached this point, when Anne, coming quietly down from Louisa's room, could not but hear what followed, for the parlor door was open.

'Then it is settled, Musgrove,' cried Captain Wentworth, 'that you stay, and that I take care of your sister home. But as to the rest, — as to the others, — if one stays to assist Mrs. Harville, I think it need be only one. Mrs. Charles Musgrove will, of course, wish to get back to her children; but if Anne will stay, no one so proper, so capable as Anne.'

She paused a moment to recover from the emotion of hearing herself so spoken of. The other two warmly agreed to what he said, and she then appeared.

'You will stay, I am sure; you will stay and nurse her,' cried he, turning to her and speaking with a glow, and yet a gentleness, which seemed almost restoring the past. She colored deeply; and he recollected himself, and moved away. She expressed herself most willing, ready, happy to remain. 'It was what she had been thinking of, and wishing to be allowed to do. A bed on the floor in Louisa's room would be sufficient for her, if Mrs. Harville would but think so.'

One thing more, and all seemed arranged. Though it was rather desirable that Mr. and Mrs. Musgrove should be previously alarmed by some share of delay, yet the time required by the Uppercross horses to take them back would be a dreadful extension of suspense; and Captain Wentworth proposed, and Charles Musgrove agreed, that it would be much better for him to take a chaise from the inn, and leave Mr. Musgrove's carriage and horses to be sent home the next morning early, when there would be the further advantage of sending an account of Louisa's night.

Captain Wentworth now hurried off to get everything ready on his part, and to be soon followed by the two ladies. When the plan was made known to Mary, how-

ever, there was an end of all peace in it. She was so wretched and so vehement, complained so much of injustice in being expected to go away instead of Anne, —Anne, who was nothing to Louisa, while she was her sister, and had the best right to stay in Henrietta's stead! Why was not she to be as useful as Anne? And to go home without Charles, too, — without her husband! No, it was too unkind! And, in short, she said more than her husband could long withstand; and as none of the others could oppose when he gave way, there was no help for it; the change of Mary for Anne was inevitable.

Anne had never submitted more reluctantly to the jealous and ill-judging claims of Mary; but so it must be, and they set off for the town, Charles taking care of his sister, and Captain Benwick attending to her. She gave a moment's recollection, as they hurried along, to the little circumstances which the same spot had witnessed earlier in the morning. There she had listened to Henrietta's schemes for Dr. Shirley's leaving Uppercross; farther on, she had first seen Mr. Elliot; a moment seemed all that could now be given to any one but Louisa, or those who were wrapped up in her welfare.

Captain Benwick was most considerably attentive to her; and, united as they all seemed by the distress of the day, she felt an increasing degree of good-will towards him, and a pleasure even in thinking that it might, perhaps, be the occasion of continuing their acquaintance.

Captain Wentworth was on the watch for them, and a chaise and four in waiting, stationed for their convenience in the lowest part of the street; but his evident surprise and vexation at the substitution of one sister for the other, the change of his countenance, the astonishment, the expressions begun and suppressed, with which Charles was listened to, made but a mortifying reception of Anne; or must at least have convinced

her that she was valued only as she could be useful to Louisa.

She endeavored to be composed, and to be just. Without emulating the feelings of an Emma towards her Henry, she would have attended Louisa with a zeal above the common claims of regard, for his sake; and she hoped he would not long be so unjust as to suppose she would shrink unnecessarily from the office of a friend.

In the mean while she was in the carriage. He had handed them both in, and placed himself between them; and in this manner, under these circumstances, full of astonishment and emotion to Anne, she quitted Lyme. How the long stage would pass, how it was to affect their manners, what was to be their sort of intercourse, she could not foresee. It was all quite natural, however. He was devoted to Henrietta, always turning towards her, and when he spoke at all, always with a view of supporting her hopes and raising her spirits. In general, his voice and manner were studiously calm. To spare Henrietta from agitation seemed the governing principle. Once only, when she had been grieving over the last ill-judged, ill-fated walk to the Cobb, bitterly lamenting that it ever had been thought of, he burst forth, as if wholly overcome.

'Don't talk of it, don't talk of it!' he cried. 'Oh, God! that I had not given way to her at the fatal moment! Had I done as I ought! But so eager and so resolute! Dear, sweet Louisa!'

Anne wondered whether it ever occurred to him now to question the justice of his own previous opinion as to the universal felicity and advantage of firmness of character; and whether it might not strike him that, like all other qualities of the mind, it should have its proportions and limits. She thought it could scarcely escape him to feel that a persuadable temper might sometimes be as much in favor of happiness as a very resolute character.

They got on fast. Anne was astonished to recognize the same hills and the same objects so soon. Their actual speed, heightened by some dread of the conclusion, made the road appear but half as long as on the day before. It was growing quite dusk, however, before they were in the neighborhood of Uppercross, and there had been total silence among them for some time, Henrietta leaning back in the corner, with a shawl over her face, giving the hope of her having cried herself to sleep; when, as they were going up their last hill, Anne found herself all at once addressed by Captain Wentworth. In a low, cautious voice, he said, —

'I have been considering what we had best do. She must not appear at first. She could not stand it. I have been thinking whether you had not better remain in the carriage with her, while I go in and break it to Mr. and Mrs. Musgrove. Do you think this a good plan?'

She did: he was satisfied, and said no more. But the remembrance of the appeal remained a pleasure to her, — as a proof of friendship, and of deference for her judgment, a great pleasure; and when it became a sort of parting proof, its value did not lessen.

When the distressing communication at Uppercross was over, and he had seen the father and mother quite as composed as could be hoped, and the daughter all the better for being with them, he announced his intention of returning in the same carriage to Lyme; and when the horses were baited, he was off.

[In the intervening chapters Louisa Musgrove recovers; Anne goes to her father's in Bath; while there she meets Mr. Elliot, finds an old acquaintance, Mrs. Smith, and learns from her the profligate character of Mr. Elliot, whom she had begun to like. Anne perceives with dismay the growing influence of Mrs. Clay over her father and sister. Henrietta Musgrove becomes engaged to Charles Hayter, and Louisa to Captain Benwick. While at Bath, Anne again meets Captain Wentworth.]

PERSUASION.

VOLUME THE SECOND.

CHAPTER XI.[1]

ONE day only had passed since Anne's conversation with Mrs. Smith; but a keener interest had succeeded, and she was now so little touched by Mr. Elliot's conduct, except by its effects in one quarter, that it became a matter of course, the next morning, still to defer her explanatory visit in Rivers Street. She had promised to be with the Musgroves from breakfast to dinner. Her faith was plighted, and Mr. Elliot's character, like the Sultaness Scheherazade's head, must live another day.

She could not keep her appointment punctually, however; the weather was unfavorable, and she had grieved over the rain on her friend's account, and felt it very much on her own, before she was able to attempt the walk. When she reached the White Hart, and made her way to the proper apartment, she found herself

[1] Chapters X. and XI. were written to replace a cancelled chapter (X.), with which Miss Austen became much dissatisfied. Originally the book closed with Chapter XI. (now XII.), and at the close was written, 'Finis, July 18, 1816.' In the following August she wrote the two chapters as we now have them, and these therefore represent her latest revised work. The cancelled chapter of *Persuasion* is given in Mr. Austen-Leigh's memoir of Jane Austen; and a comparison of this with the two chapters written to replace it will be found extremely interesting.

neither arriving quite in time, nor the first to arrive. The party before her were, Mrs. Musgrove talking to Mrs. Croft, and Captain Harville to Captain Wentworth; and she immediately heard that Mary and Henrietta, too impatient to wait, had gone out the moment it had cleared, but would be back again soon, and that the strictest injunctions had been left with Mrs. Musgrove to keep her there till they returned. She had only to submit, sit down, be outwardly composed, and feel herself plunged at once in all the agitations which she had merely laid her account of tasting a little before the morning closed. There was no delay, no waste of time. She was deep in the happiness of such misery, or the misery of such happiness, instantly. Two minutes after her entering the room, Captain Wentworth said, —

'We will write the letter we were talking of, Harville, now, if you will give me the materials.'

Materials were all at hand, on a separate table; he went to it, and nearly turning his back on them all, was engrossed by writing.

Mrs. Musgrove was giving Mrs. Croft the history of her eldest daughter's engagement, and just in that inconvenient tone of voice which was perfectly audible while it pretended to be a whisper. Anne felt that she did not belong to the conversation, and yet, as Captain Harville seemed thoughtful and not disposed to talk, she could not avoid hearing many undesirable particulars; such as, 'how Mr. Musgrove and my brother Hayter had met again and again to talk it over; what my brother Hayter had said one day, and what Mr. Musgrove had proposed the next, and what had occurred to my sister Hayter, and what the young people had wished, and what I said at first I never could consent to, but was afterwards persuaded to think might do very well,' and a great deal in the same style of open-hearted communication — minutiæ which, even with every advantage of taste and delicacy, which good Mrs. Musgrove

could not give, could be properly interesting only to the principals. Mrs. Croft was attending with great good-humor, and whenever she spoke at all, it was very sensibly. Anne hoped the gentlemen might each be too much self-occupied to hear.

'And so, ma'am, all these things considered,' said Mrs. Musgrove, in her powerful whisper, 'though we could have wished it different, yet, altogether, we did not think it fair to stand out any longer; for Charles Hayter was quite wild about it, and Henrietta was pretty near as bad; and so we thought they had better marry at once, and make the best of it, as many others have done before them. "At any rate," said I, "it will be better than a long engagement."'

'That is precisely what I was going to observe,' cried Mrs. Croft. 'I would rather have young people settle on a small income at once, and have to struggle with a few difficulties together, than be involved in a long engagement. I always think that no mutual —'

'Oh, dear Mrs. Croft,' cried Mrs. Musgrove, unable to let her finish her speech, 'there is nothing I so abominate for young people as a long engagement. It is what I always protested against for my children. "It is all very well," I used to say, "for young people to be engaged, if there is a certainty of their being able to marry in six months, or even in twelve; but a long engagement!"'

'Yes, dear ma'am,' said Mrs. Croft, 'or an uncertain engagement, — an engagement which may be long. To begin without knowing that at such a time there will be the means of marrying, I hold to be very unsafe and unwise; and what I think all parents should prevent as far as they can.'

Anne found an unexpected interest here. She felt it in its application to herself, — felt it in a nervous thrill all over her; and at the same moment that her eyes instinctively glanced towards the distant table, Captain Wentworth's pen ceased to move; his head was raised,

pausing, listening, and he turned round the next instant to give a look — one quick, conscious look — at her.

The two ladies continued to talk, to re-urge the same admitted truths, and enforce them with such examples of the ill effect of a contrary practice as had fallen within their observation. But Anne heard nothing distinctly; it was only a buzz of words in her ear; her mind was in confusion.

Captain Harville, who had in truth been hearing none of it, now left his seat, and moved to a window; and Anne, seeming to watch him, though it was from thorough absence of mind, became gradually sensible that he was inviting her to join him where he stood. He looked at her with a smile, and a little motion of the head, which expressed, 'Come to me, I have something to say;' and the unaffected, easy kindness of manner which denoted the feelings of an older acquaintance than he really was, strongly enforced the invitation. She roused herself and went to him. The window at which he stood was at the other end of the room from where the two ladies were sitting, and, though nearer to Captain Wentworth's table, not very near. As she joined him, Captain Harville's countenance reassumed the serious, thoughtful expression which seemed its natural character.

'Look here,' said he, unfolding a parcel in his hand, and displaying a small miniature painting, 'do you know who that is?'

'Certainly; Captain Benwick.'

'Yes; and you may guess who it is for. But,' — in a deep tone,—'it was not done for her. Miss Elliot, do you remember our walking together at Lyme, and grieving for him? I little thought then — but no matter. This was drawn at the Cape. He met with a clever young German artist at the Cape, and, in compliance with a promise to my poor sister, sat to him, and was bringing it home for her. And I have now the charge of getting it properly set for another! It was a commission to

me! But who else was there to employ? I hope I can allow for him. I am not sorry, indeed, to make it over to another. He undertakes it,' — looking towards Captain Wentworth, — 'he is writing about it now.' And, with a quivering lip, he wound up the whole by adding, 'Poor Fanny! she would not have forgotten him so soon.'

'No,' replied Anne, in a low, feeling voice, 'that I can easily believe.'

'It was not in her nature. She doted on him.'

'It would not be the nature of any woman who truly loved.'

Captain Harville smiled, as much as to say, 'Do you claim that for your sex?' And she answered the question, smiling also, 'Yes. We certainly do not forget you so soon as you forget us. It is, perhaps, our fate rather than our merit. We cannot help ourselves. We live at home, quiet, confined, and our feelings prey upon us. You are forced on exertion. You have always a profession, pursuits, business of some sort or other, to take you back into the world immediately, and continual occupation and change soon weaken impressions.'

'Granting your assertion that the world does all this so soon for men (which, however, I do not think I shall grant), it does not apply to Benwick. He has not been forced upon any exertion. The peace turned him on shore at the very moment, and he has been living with us, in our little family circle, ever since.'

'True,' said Anne, 'very true; I did not recollect; but what shall we say now, Captain Harville? If the change be not from outward circumstances, it must be from within; it must be nature, man's nature, which has done the business for Captain Benwick.'

'No, no, it is not man's nature. I will not allow it to be more man's nature than woman's to be inconstant and forget those they do love or have loved. I believe the reverse. I believe in a true analogy between our bodily frames and our mental; and that as our bodies

are the strongest so are our feelings, — capable of bearing most rough usage, and riding out the heaviest weather.'

'Your feelings may be the strongest,' replied Anne, 'but the same spirit of analogy will authorize me to assert that ours are the most tender. Man is more robust than woman, but he is not longer lived, which exactly explains my view of the nature of their attachments. Nay, it would be too hard upon you, if it were otherwise. You have difficulties and privations and dangers enough to struggle with. You are always laboring and toiling, exposed to every risk and hardship; your home, country, friends, all quitted. Neither time nor health nor life to be called your own, it would be too hard indeed' — with a faltering voice — 'if woman's feelings were to be added to all this.'

'We shall never agree upon this question,' Captain Harville was beginning to say, when a slight noise called their attention to Captain Wentworth's hitherto perfectly quiet division of the room. It was nothing more than that his pen had fallen down; but Anne was startled at finding him nearer than she had supposed, and half inclined to suspect that the pen had only fallen because he had been occupied by them, striving to catch sounds which yet she did not think he could have caught.

'Have you finished your letter?' said Captain Harville.

'Not quite — a few lines more. I shall have done in five minutes.'

'There is no hurry on my side. I am only ready whenever you are. I am in very good anchorage here,' — smiling at Anne, — 'well supplied, and want for nothing. No hurry for a signal at all. Well, Miss Elliot,' — lowering his voice, — 'as I was saying, we shall never agree, I suppose, upon this point. No man and woman would, probably. But let me observe that all histories are against you, — all stories, prose and verse. If I had such a memory as Benwick, I could bring you fifty

quotations in a moment on my side of the argument; and I do not think I ever opened a book in my life which had not something to say upon woman's inconstancy. Songs and proverbs, all talk of woman's fickleness. But perhaps you will say these were all written by men.'

'Perhaps I shall. Yes, yes, if you please, no reference to examples in books. Men have had every advantage of us in telling their own story. Education has been theirs in so much higher a degree; the pen has been in their hands. I will not allow books to prove anything.'

'But how shall we prove anything?'

'We never shall. We never can expect to prove anything upon such a point. It is a difference of opinion which does not admit of proof. We each begin, probably, with a little bias towards our own sex, and upon that bias build every circumstance in favor of it which has occurred within our own circle; many of which circumstances (perhaps those very cases which strike us the most) may be precisely such as cannot be brought forward without betraying a confidence, or in some respect saying what should not be said.'

'Ah!' cried Captain Harville, in a tone of strong feeling, 'if I could but make you comprehend what a man suffers when he takes a last look at his wife and children, and watches the boat that he has sent them off in, as long as it is in sight, and then turns away and says, "God knows whether we ever meet again!" And then, if I could convey to you the glow of his soul when he does see them again; when, coming back after a twelvemonth's absence, perhaps, and obliged to put into another port, he calculates how soon it be possible to get them there, pretending to deceive himself, and saying, "They cannot be here till such a day," but all the while hoping for them twelve hours sooner, and seeing them arrive at last, as if Heaven had given them wings, by many hours sooner still! If I could explain to you all

this, and all that a man can bear and do, and glories to do, for the sake of these treasures of his existence! I speak, you know, only of such men as have hearts!' pressing his own with emotion.

'Oh,' cried Anne, eagerly, 'I hope I do justice to all that is felt by you, and by those who resemble you. God forbid that I should undervalue the warm and faithful feelings of any of my fellow-creatures. I should deserve utter contempt if I dared to suppose that true attachment and constancy were known only by woman. No, I believe you capable of everything great and good in your married lives. I believe you equal to every important exertion, and to every domestic forbearance, so long as — if I may be allowed the expression — so long as you have an object. I mean, while the woman you love lives, and lives for you. All the privilege I claim for my own sex (it is not a very enviable one, you need not covet it) is that of loving longest when existence or when hope is gone.'[1]

She could not immediately have uttered another sentence; her heart was too full, her breath too much oppressed.

'You are a good soul,' cried Captain Harville, putting his hand on her arm quite affectionately. 'There is no

[1] In *Persuasion*, Miss Austen strikes a note hardly touched upon before, and shows that she possessed keener sympathies and a tenderer heart than her other books would perhaps convey the impression of her having. Had she lived to write more books, it is fair to surmise that this element of pathos would have found in them still freer expression. Miss Keddie says of *Persuasion*, that 'while it is often as penetrating and unerring in discussing the absurdities and follies of human nature as *Pride and Prejudice* and *Northanger Abbey*, it has a gentle grace and a pathetic feeling all its own, so far as Jane Austen's novels are concerned.' William George Pellew, the critic, after speaking of a didactic flavor which he detects in *Mansfield Park* and *Emma*, goes on to say: 'In *Persuasion*, her last novel, Miss Austen is no longer didactic. It is to my taste the most mellow and charming of all the novels; and in place of the rather unsympathetic wit of *Pride and Prejudice*, there appears almost for the first time in Miss Austen an element of pathos.'

quarrelling with you. And when I think of Benwick, my tongue is tied.'

Their attention was called towards the others. Mrs. Croft was taking leave.

'Here, Frederick, you and I part company, I believe,' said she. 'I am going home, and you have an engagement with your friend. To-night we may have the pleasure of all meeting again at your party,' turning to Anne. 'We had your sister's card yesterday, and I understand Frederick had a card too, though I did not see it, — and you are disengaged, Frederick, are you not, as well as ourselves?'

Captain Wentworth was folding up a letter in great haste, and either could not or would not answer fully.

'Yes,' said he, 'very true; here we separate, but Harville and I shall soon be after you; that is, Harville, if you are ready, I am in half a minute. I know you will not be sorry to be off. I shall be at your service in half a minute.'

Mrs. Croft left them, and Captain Wentworth, having sealed his letter with great rapidity, was indeed ready, and had even a hurried, agitated air, which showed impatience to be gone. Anne knew not how to understand it. She had the kindest 'Good-morning, God bless you!' from Captain Harville, but from him not a word, not a look! He had passed out of the room without a look!

She had only time, however, to move closer to the table where he had been writing, when footsteps were heard returning; the door opened: it was himself. He begged their pardon, but he had forgotten his gloves: and instantly crossing the room to the writing-table, and standing with his back towards Mrs. Musgrove, he drew out a letter from under the scattered paper, placed it before Anne with eyes of glowing entreaty fixed on her for a moment, and hastily collecting his gloves, was again out of the room almost before Mrs. Musgrove was aware of his being in it, — the work of an instant!

The revolution which one instant had made in Anne was almost beyond expression. The letter, with a direction hardly legible, to 'Miss A. E——,' was evidently the one which he had been folding so hastily. While supposed to be writing only to Captain Benwick, he had been also addressing her! On the contents of that letter depended all which this world could do for her! Anything was possible, anything might be defied rather than suspense. Mrs. Musgrove had little arrangements at her own table; to their protection she must trust; and sinking into the chair which he had occupied, succeeding to the very spot where he had leaned and written, her eyes devoured the following words:

'I can listen no longer in silence. I must speak to you by such means as are within my reach. You pierce my soul. I am half agony, half hope. Tell me not that I am too late, that such precious feelings are gone forever. I offer myself to you again with a heart even more your own than when you almost broke it eight years and a half ago. Dare not say that man forgets sooner than woman, that his love has an earlier death. I have loved none but you. Unjust I may have been, weak and resentful I have been, but never inconstant. You alone have brought me to Bath. For you alone I think and plan. Have you not seen this? Can you fail to have understood my wishes? I had not waited even these ten days, could I have read your feelings as I think you must have penetrated mine. I can hardly write. I am every instant hearing something which overpowers me. You sink your voice, but I can distinguish the tones of that voice when they would be lost on others. Too good, too excellent creature! You do us justice, indeed. You do believe that there is true attachment and constancy among men. Believe it to be most fervent, most undeviating, in

'F. W.

'I must go, uncertain of my fate; but I shall return hither, or follow your party, as soon as possible. A word, a look, will be enough to decide whether I enter your father's house this evening or never.'

Such a letter was not to be soon recovered from. Half an hour's solitude and reflection might have tranquillized

her; but the ten minutes only, which now passed before she was interrupted, with all the restraints of her situation, could do nothing towards tranquillity. Every moment rather brought fresh agitation. It was an overpowering happiness. And before she was beyond the first stage of full sensation, Charles, Mary, and Henrietta all came in.

The absolute necessity of seeming like herself produced then an immediate struggle; but after a while she could do no more. She began not to understand a word they said, and was obliged to plead indisposition and excuse herself. They could then see that she looked very ill, were shocked and concerned, and would not stir without her for the world. This was dreadful. Would they only have gone away, and left her in the quiet possession of that room, it would have been her cure; but to have them all standing or waiting around her was distracting, and, in desperation, she said she would go home.

'By all means, my dear,' cried Mrs. Musgrove, 'go home directly, and take care of yourself, that you may be fit for the evening. I wish Sarah was here to doctor you, but I am no doctor myself. Charles, ring and order a chair. She must not walk.'

But the chair would never do. Worse than all! To lose the possibility of speaking two words to Captain Wentworth in the course of her quiet, solitary progress up the town (and she felt almost certain of meeting him) could not be borne. The chair was earnestly protested against; and Mrs. Musgrove, who thought only of one sort of illness, having assured herself, with some anxiety, that there had been no fall in the case, that Anne had not, at any time lately, slipped down and got a blow on her head, that she was perfectly convinced of having had no fall, could part with her cheerfully, and depend on finding her better at night.

Anxious to omit no possible precaution, Anne struggled, and said, —

'I am afraid, ma'am, that it is not perfectly understood. Pray be so good as to mention to the other gentlemen that we hope to see your whole party this evening. I am afraid there has been some mistake; and I wish you particularly to assure Captain Harville and Captain Wentworth that we hope to see them both.'

'Oh, my dear, it is quite understood, I give you my word. Captain Harville has no thought but of going.'

'Do you think so? But I am afraid; and I should be so very sorry. Will you promise me to mention it when you see them again? You will see them both again this morning, I dare say. Do promise me!'

'To be sure I will, if you wish it. Charles, if you see Captain Harville anywhere, remember to give Miss Anne's message. But, indeed, my dear, you need not be uneasy. Captain Harville holds himself quite engaged, I'll answer for it; and Captain Wentworth the same, I dare say.'

Anne could do no more; but her heart prophesied some mischance, to damp the perfection of her felicity. It could not be very lasting, however. Even if he did not come to Camden Place himself, it would be in her power to send an intelligible sentence by Captain Harville.

Another momentary vexation occurred. Charles, in his real concern and good nature, would go home with her: there was no preventing him. This was almost cruel. But she could not be long ungrateful; he was sacrificing an engagement at a gunsmith's, to be of use to her; and she set off with him, with no feeling but gratitude apparent. They were in Union Street,[1] when a quicker step behind, a something of familiar sound, gave her two moments' preparation for the sight of Captain Wentworth. He joined them; but, as if irresolute

[1] *Union Street.* A short street leading from Westgate Street, and constituting part of a continuous thoroughfare, of which the two ends are formed by Milsom and Stall Streets.

whether to join or to pass on, said nothing — only looked. Anne could command herself enough to receive that look, and not repulsively. The cheeks which had been pale now glowed, and the movements which had hesitated were decided. He walked by her side. Presently struck by a sudden thought, Charles said, —

'Captain Wentworth, which way are you going,— only to Gay Street,[1] or farther up the town?'

'I hardly know,' replied Captain Wentworth, surprised.

'Are you going as high as Belmont? Are you going near Camden Place? Because, if you are, I shall have no scruple in asking you to take my place, and give Anne your arm to her father's door. She is rather done for this morning, and must not go so far without help; and I ought to be at that fellow's in the market-place. He promised me the sight of a capital gun he is just going to send off; said he would keep it unpacked to the last possible moment, that I might see it; and if I do not turn back now, I have no chance. By his description, a good deal like the second-sized double-barrel of mine, which you shot with one day round Winthrop.'

There could not be an objection. There could be only a most proper alacrity, a most obliging compliance for public view, and smiles reined in and spirits dancing in private rapture. In half a minute Charles was at the bottom of Union Street again, and the other two proceeding together; and soon words enough had passed between them to decide their direction towards the comparatively quiet and retired gravel-walk, where the power of conversation would make the present hour a blessing indeed, and prepare it for all the immortality which the happiest recollections of their own future lives could bestow. There they exchanged again those feelings and those promises which had once before seemed to secure everything, but which had been followed by so

[1] *Gay Street.* A thoroughfare leading from Westgate Street to the Circus.

many years of division and estrangement. There they returned again into the past, more exquisitely happy, perhaps, in their reunion than when it had been first projected; more tender, more tried, more fixed in a knowledge of each other's character, truth, and attachment; more equal to act, more justified in acting. And there, as they slowly paced the gradual ascent, heedless of every group around them, seeing neither sauntering politicians, bustling housekeepers, flirting girls, nor nursery-maids and children, they could indulge in those retrospections and acknowledgments, and especially in those explanations of what had directly preceded the present moment, which were so poignant and so ceaseless in interest. All the little variations of the last week were gone through, and of yesterday and to-day there could scarcely be an end.

She had not mistaken him. Jealousy of Mr. Elliot had been the retarding weight, the doubt, the torment. That had begun to operate in the very hour of first meeting her in Bath; that had returned, after a short suspension, to ruin the concert; and that had influenced him in everything he had said and done, or omitted to say and do, in the last four-and-twenty hours. It had been gradually yielding to the better hopes which her looks, or words, or actions occasionally encouraged; it had been vanquished at last by those sentiments and those tones which had reached him while she talked with Captain Harville; and under the irresistible governance of which he had seized a sheet of paper and poured out his feelings.

Of what he had then written nothing was to be retracted or qualified. He persisted in having loved none but her. She had never been supplanted. He never even believed himself to see her equal. Thus much, indeed, he was obliged to acknowledge,—that he had been constant unconsciously, nay, unintentionally; that he had meant to forget her, and believed it to be done. He had imagined himself indifferent, when he had only

been angry; and he had been unjust to her merits, because he had been a sufferer from them. Her character was now fixed on his mind as perfection itself, maintaining the loveliest medium of fortitude and gentleness; but he was obliged to acknowledge that only at Uppercross had he learned to do her justice, and only at Lyme had he begun to understand himself.

At Lyme he had received lessons of more than one sort. The passing admiration of Mr. Elliot had at last roused him, and the scenes on the Cobb and at Captain Harville's had fixed her superiority.

In his preceding attempts to attach himself to Louisa Musgrove (the attempts of angry pride), he protested that he had forever felt it to be impossible; that he had not cared, could not care for Louisa; though, till that day, till the leisure for reflection which followed it, he had not understood the perfect excellence of the mind with which Louisa's could so ill bear a comparison, or the perfect, unrivalled hold it possessed over his own. There, he had learned to distinguish between the steadiness of principle and the obstinacy of self-will, between the darings of heedlessness and the resolution of a collected mind. There, he had seen everything to exalt in his estimation the woman he had lost; and there begun to deplore the pride, the folly, the madness of resentment, which had kept him from trying to regain her when thrown in his way.

From that period his penance had become severe. He had no sooner been free from the horror and remorse attending the first few days of Louisa's accident, no sooner begun to feel himself alive again, than he had begun to feel himself, though alive, not at liberty.

'I found,' said he, 'that I was considered by Harville an engaged man! that neither Harville nor his wife entertained a doubt of our mutual attachment. I was startled and shocked. To a degree, I could contradict this instantly; but when I began to reflect that others

might have felt the same — her own family, nay, perhaps herself — I was no longer at my own disposal. I was hers in honor if she wished it. I had been unguarded. I had not thought seriously on this subject before. I had not considered that my excessive intimacy must have its danger of ill consequence in many ways, and that I had no right to be trying whether I could attach myself to either of the girls, at the risk of raising even an unpleasant report, were there no other ill effects. I had been grossly wrong, and must abide the consequences.'

He found too late, in short, that he had entangled himself, and that precisely as he became fully satisfied of his not caring for Louisa at all, he must regard himself as bound to her, if her sentiments for him were what the Harvilles supposed. It determined him to leave Lyme, and await her complete recovery elsewhere. He would gladly weaken by any fair means whatever feelings or speculations concerning him might exist; and he went, therefore, to his brother's, meaning after a while to return to Kellynch, and act as circumstances might require.

'I was six weeks with Edward,' said he, 'and saw him happy. I could have no other pleasure. I deserved none. He inquired after you very particularly; asked even if you were personally altered, little suspecting that to my eye you could never alter.'

Anne smiled, and let it pass. It was too pleasing a blunder for a reproach. It is something for a woman to be assured, in her eight-and-twentieth year, that she has not lost one charm of earlier youth: but the value of such homage was inexpressibly increased to Anne, by comparing it with former words, and feeling it to be the result, not the cause, of a revival of his warm attachment.

He had remained in Shropshire, lamenting the blindness of his own pride, and the blunders of his own calculations, till at once released from Louisa by the

astonishing and felicitous intelligence of her engagement with Benwick.

'Here,' said he, 'ended the worst of my state; for now I could at least put myself in the way of happiness, I could exert myself, I could do something. But to be waiting so long in inaction, and waiting only for evil, had been dreadful. Within the last five minutes I said, "I will be at Bath on Wednesday," and I was. Was it unpardonable to think it worth my while to come, and to arrive with some degree of hope? You were single. It was possible that you might retain the feelings of the past, as I did; and one encouragement happened to be mine. I could never doubt that you would be loved and sought by others, but I knew to a certainty that you had refused one man, at least, of better pretensions than myself; and I could not help often saying, "Was this for me?"'

Their first meeting in Milsom Street afforded much to be said, but the concert still more. That evening seemed to be made up of exquisite moments. The moment of her stepping forward in the octagon-room to speak to him, the moment of Mr. Elliot's appearing and tearing her away, and one or two subsequent moments, marked by returning hope or increasing despondence, were dwelt on with energy.

'To see you,' cried he, 'in the midst of those who could not be my well-wishers; to see your cousin close by you, conversing and smiling, and feel all the horrible eligibilities and proprieties of the match; to consider it as the certain wish of every being who could hope to influence you; even if your own feelings were reluctant or indifferent, to consider what powerful supports would be his, — was it not enough to make the fool of me which I appeared? How could I look on without agony? Was not the very sight of the friend who sat behind you, was not the recollection of what had been, the knowledge of her influence, the indelible, immovable impression of what persuasion had once done, — was it not all against me?'

'You should have distinguished,' replied Anne. 'You should not have suspected me now,—the case so different, and my age so different. If I was wrong in yielding to persuasion once, remember that it was to persuasion exerted on the side of safety, not of risk. When I yielded, I thought it was to duty; but no duty could be called in aid here. In marrying a man indifferent to me, all risk would have been incurred, and all duty violated.'

'Perhaps I ought to have reasoned thus,' he replied, 'but I could not. I could not derive benefit from the late knowledge I had acquired of your character. I could not bring it into play: it was overwhelmed, buried, lost in those earlier feelings which I had been smarting under year after year. I could think of you only as one who had yielded, who had given me up, who had been influenced by any one rather than by me. I saw you with the very person who had guided you in that year of misery. I had no reason to believe her of less authority now. The force of habit was to be added.'

'I should have thought,' said Anne, 'that my manner to yourself might have spared you much or all of this.'

'No, no! your manner might be only the ease which your engagement to another man would give. I left you in this belief; and yet — I was determined to see you again. My spirits rallied with the morning, and I felt that I had still a motive for remaining here.'

At last Anne was at home again, and happier than any one in that house could have conceived. All the surprise and suspense, and every other painful part of the morning dissipated by this conversation, she re-entered the house so happy as to be obliged to find an alloy in some momentary apprehensions of its being impossible to last. An interval of meditation, serious and grateful, was the best corrective of everything dangerous in such high-wrought felicity; and she went to her room, and grew steadfast and fearless in the thankfulness of her enjoyment.

The evening came, the drawing-rooms were lighted up, the company assembled. It was but a card-party, it was but a mixture of those who had never met before, and those who met too often,— a commonplace business, too numerous for intimacy, too small for variety; but Anne had never found an evening shorter. Glowing and lovely in sensibility and happiness, and more generally admired than she thought about or cared for, she had cheerful or forbearing feelings for every creature around her. Mr. Elliot was there; she avoided, but she could pity him. The Wallises; she had amusement in understanding them. Lady Dalrymple and Miss Carteret; they would soon be innoxious cousins to her. She cared not for Mrs. Clay, and had nothing to blush for in the public manners of her father and sister. With the Musgroves, there was the happy chat of perfect ease; with Captain Harville, the kind-hearted intercourse of brother and sister; with Lady Russell, attempts at conversation, which a delicious consciousness cut short; with Admiral and Mrs. Croft, everything of peculiar cordiality and fervent interest, which the same consciousness sought to conceal, — and with Captain Wentworth, some moments of communication continually occurring, and always the hope of more, and always the knowledge of his being there!

It was in one of these short meetings, each apparently occupied in admiring a fine display of green-house plants, that she said, —

'I have been thinking over the past, and trying impartially to judge of the right and wrong, I mean with regard to myself; and I must believe that I was right, much as I suffered from it, that I was perfectly right in being guided by the friend whom you will love better than you do now. To me she was in the place of a parent. Do not mistake me, however; I am not saying that she did not err in her advice. It was, perhaps, one of those cases in which advice is good or bad only as the event decides; and for myself, I certainly never

should, in any circumstance of tolerable similarity, give such advice. But I mean that I was right in submitting to her, and that if I had done otherwise, I should have suffered more in continuing the engagement than I did even in giving it up, because I should have suffered in my conscience. I have now, as far as such a sentiment is allowable in human nature, nothing to reproach myself with; and if I mistake not, a strong sense of duty is no bad part of a woman's portion.'

He looked at her, looked at Lady Russell, and looking again at her, replied, as if in cool deliberation,—

'Not yet. But there are hopes of her being forgiven in time. I trust to being in charity with her soon. But I too have been thinking over the past, and a question has suggested itself, whether there may not have been one person more my enemy even than that lady? My own self. Tell me if, when I returned to England in the year eight, with a few thousand pounds,[1] and was posted into the *Laconia*,— if I had then written to you, would you have answered my letter: would you, in short, have renewed the engagement then?'

'Would I!' was all her answer; but the accent was decisive enough.

'Good God!' he cried, 'you would! It is not that I did not think of it, or desire it, as what could alone crown all my other success; but I was proud, too proud to ask again. I did not understand you. I shut my eyes and would not understand you, or do you justice. This is a recollection which ought to make me forgive every one sooner than myself. Six years of separation and suffering might have been spared. It is a sort of pain, too, which is new to me. I have been used to the gratification of believing myself to earn every blessing that I enjoyed. I have valued myself on honorable toils and just rewards. Like other great men under

[1] "These were the very different days of frequent naval engagements and much prize money." — MISS KEDDIE.

reverses,' he added with a smile, 'I must endeavor to subdue my mind to my fortune. I must learn to brook being happier than I deserve.'[1]

CHAPTER XII.

WHO can be in doubt of what followed? When any two young people take it into their heads to marry, they are pretty sure by perseverance to carry their point, be they ever so poor, or ever so imprudent, or ever so little likely to be necessary to each other's ultimate comfort. This may be bad morality to conclude with, but I believe it to be truth; and if such parties succeed, how should a Captain Wentworth and an Anne Elliot, with the advantage of maturity and mind consciousness of right, and one independent fortune between them, fail of bearing down every opposition? They might, in fact, have borne down a great deal more than they met with, for there was little to distress them beyond the want of graciousness and warmth. Sir Walter made no objection, and Elizabeth did nothing worse than look cold and unconcerned. Captain Wentworth, with five-and-twenty thousand pounds, and as high in his profession as merit and activity could place him, was no longer nobody. He was now esteemed quite worthy to address the daughter of a foolish, spendthrift baronet, who had not had principle or sense enough to maintain himself in the situation in which Providence had placed him, and who could give his daughter at present but a small part of

[1] 'Anne Elliot's pathetic position is unique, so far as I know, in the literature of Jane Austen's day. The contrast of her faded face and subdued spirit with Henrietta and Louisa Musgrove's fresh bloom and unchecked joyousness would not be attempted in our day, with the same object in view, by an author who put a supreme value on material advantages, and extolled the attractions of youth beyond all other attractions. No such author — above all in a semi-cynical, semi-sensuous generation — could have anticipated, far less projected, the end of *Persuasion*.' — MISS KEDDIE.

the share of ten thousand pounds which must be hers hereafter.

Sir Walter, indeed, though he had no affection for Anne, and no vanity flattered, to make him really happy on the occasion, was very far from thinking it a bad match for her. On the contrary, when he saw more of Captain Wentworth, saw him repeatedly by daylight, and eyed him well, he was very much struck by his personal claims, and felt that his superiority of appearance might be not unfairly balanced against her superiority of rank; and all this, assisted by his well-sounding name, enabled Sir Walter at last to prepare his pen, with a very good grace, for the insertion of the marriage in the volume of honor.

The only one among them whose opposition of feeling could excite any serious anxiety was Lady Russell. Anne knew that Lady Russell must be suffering some pain in understanding and relinquishing Mr. Elliot, and be making some struggles to become truly acquainted with, and do justice to, Captain Wentworth. This, however, was what Lady Russell had now to do. She must learn to feel that she had been mistaken with regard to both; that she had been unfairly influenced by appearances in each; that because Captain Wentworth's manners had not suited her own ideas, she had been too quick in suspecting them to indicate a character of dangerous impetuosity; and that because Mr. Elliot's manners had precisely pleased her in their propriety and correctness, their general politeness and suavity, she had been too quick in receiving them as the certain result of the most correct opinions and well-regulated mind. There was nothing less for Lady Russell to do than to admit that she had been pretty completely wrong, and to take up a new set of opinions and hopes.

There is a quickness of perception in some, a nicety in the discernment of character, a natural penetration, in short, which no experience in others can equal; and Lady Russell had been less gifted in this part of under-

standing than her young friend. But she was a very good woman, and if her second object was to be sensible and well-judging, her first was to see Anne happy. She loved Anne better than she loved her own abilities; and when the awkwardness of the beginning was over, found little hardship in attaching herself as a mother to the man who was securing the happiness of her other child.

Of all the family, Mary was probably the one most immediately gratified by the circumstance. It was creditable to have a sister married, and she might flatter herself with having been greatly instrumental to the connection, by keeping Anne with her in the autumn; and as her own sister must be better than her husband's sisters, it was very agreeable that Captain Wentworth should be a richer man than either Captain Benwick or Charles Hayter. She had something to suffer, perhaps, when they came into contact again, in seeing Anne restored to the rights of seniority, and the mistress of a very pretty landaulette; but she had a future to look forward to, of powerful consolation. Anne had no Uppercross Hall before her, no landed estate, no headship of a family; and if they could but keep Captain Wentworth from being made a baronet, she would not change situations with Anne.[1]

It would be well for the eldest sister if she were

[1] 'In the intense sense of reality which all Jane Austen's stories give us, we are prompted here to go beyond what the author has chosen to tell us, and speculate how the Musgroves, great and small, received the news, not merely of Captain Wentworth and Anne Elliot's engagement, but what they were sure to hear also, sooner or later, that it was the end of an old attachment, utterly unsuspected by all their friends at Uppercross. Would the Musgroves in their good nature content themselves with thinking the couple had kept their secret well, or would there be a general, slightly indignant sense of having been humbugged, like in its degree to that which Emma Woodhouse experienced when she learned the long-standing engagement between Frank Churchill and Jane Fairfax?' — Miss Keddie.

equally satisfied with her situation, for a change is not very probable there. She had soon the mortification of seeing Mr. Elliot withdraw, and no one of proper condition has since presented himself to raise even the unfounded hopes which sunk with him.

The news of his cousin Anne's engagement burst on Mr. Elliot most unexpectedly. It deranged his best plan of domestic happiness, his best hope of keeping Sir Walter single by the watchfulness which a son-in-law's rights would have given. But, though discomfited and disappointed, he could still do something for his own interest and his own enjoyment. He soon quitted Bath; and on Mrs. Clay's quitting it likewise soon afterwards, and being next heard of as established under his protection in London, it was evident how double a game he had been playing, and how determined he was to save himself from being cut out by one artful woman, at least.

Mrs. Clay's affections had overpowered her interest, and she had sacrificed, for the young man's sake, the possibility of scheming longer for Sir Walter. She has abilities, however, as well as affections; and it is now a doubtful point whether his cunning, or hers, may finally carry the day; whether, after preventing her from being the wife of Sir Walter, he may not be wheedled and caressed at last into making her the wife of Sir William.

It cannot be doubted that Sir Walter and Elizabeth were shocked and mortified by the loss of their companion, and the discovery of their deception in her. They had their great cousins, to be sure, to resort to for comfort; but they must long feel that to flatter and follow others, without being flattered and followed in turn, is but a state of half enjoyment.

Anne, satisfied at a very early period of Lady Russell's meaning to love Captain Wentworth as she ought, had no other alloy to the happiness of her prospects than what arose from the consciousness of having no relations

to bestow on him which a man of sense could value. There she felt her own inferiority keenly. The disproportion in their fortune was nothing; it did not give her a moment's regret; but to have no family to receive and estimate him properly; nothing of respectability, of harmony, of good will to offer in return for all the worth and all the prompt welcome which met her in his brothers and sisters, was a source of as lively pain as her mind could well be sensible of, under circumstances of otherwise strong felicity. She had but two friends in the world to add to his list,— Lady Russell and Mrs. Smith. To those, however, he was very well disposed to attach himself. Lady Russell, in spite of all her former transgressions, he could now value from his heart. While he was not obliged to say that he believed her to have been right in originally dividing them, he was ready to say almost everything else in her favor; and as for Mrs. Smith, she had claims of various kinds to recommend her quickly and permanently.

Her recent good offices by Anne had been enough in themselves; and their marriage, instead of depriving her of one friend, secured her two. She was their earliest visitor in their settled life; and Captain Wentworth, by putting her in the way of recovering her husband's property in the West Indies; by writing for her, acting for her, and seeing her through all the petty difficulties of the case, with the activity and exertion of a fearless man and a determined friend, fully requited the services which she had rendered, or ever meant to render, to his wife.

Mrs. Smith's enjoyments were not spoiled by this improvement of income, with some improvement of health, and the acquisition of such friends to be often with, for her cheerfulness and mental alacrity did not fail her; and while these prime supplies of good remained, she might have bid defiance even to greater accessions of worldly prosperity. She might have been absolutely rich and perfectly healthy, and yet be happy.

Her spring of felicity was in the glow of her spirits, as her friend Anne's was in the warmth of her heart. Anne was tenderness itself, and she had the full worth of it in Captain Wentworth's affection.[1] His profession was all that could ever make her friends wish that tenderness less; the dread of a future war all that could dim her sunshine. She gloried in being a sailor's wife, but she must pay the tax of quick alarm for belonging to that profession which is, if possible, more distinguished in its domestic virtues than in its national importance.[2]

[1] 'Anne Elliot is Shakespeare's Viola translated into an English girl of the nineteenth century. Like Viola, she never tells her love, or rather never talks of it after its extinguishing, but sits like patience on a monument smiling at grief; the green and yellow melancholy feeds on her and wastes her beauty. Like Viola, too, she meekly ministers to the woman who is unknowingly her rival. Miss Austen must surely have had Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* in her mind while she was writing this novel, for not only is the general conception of the situation the same, but also the chapters which she wrote during the last months of her life are directly founded upon Shakespeare.' — *North British Review*, vol. lii.

[2] 'The last words of praise to the gallant profession to which her brothers belonged is another testimony to her quick womanly response to all that was pathetic and heroic.' — Miss Keddie.

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